

Life on the Red River of the North

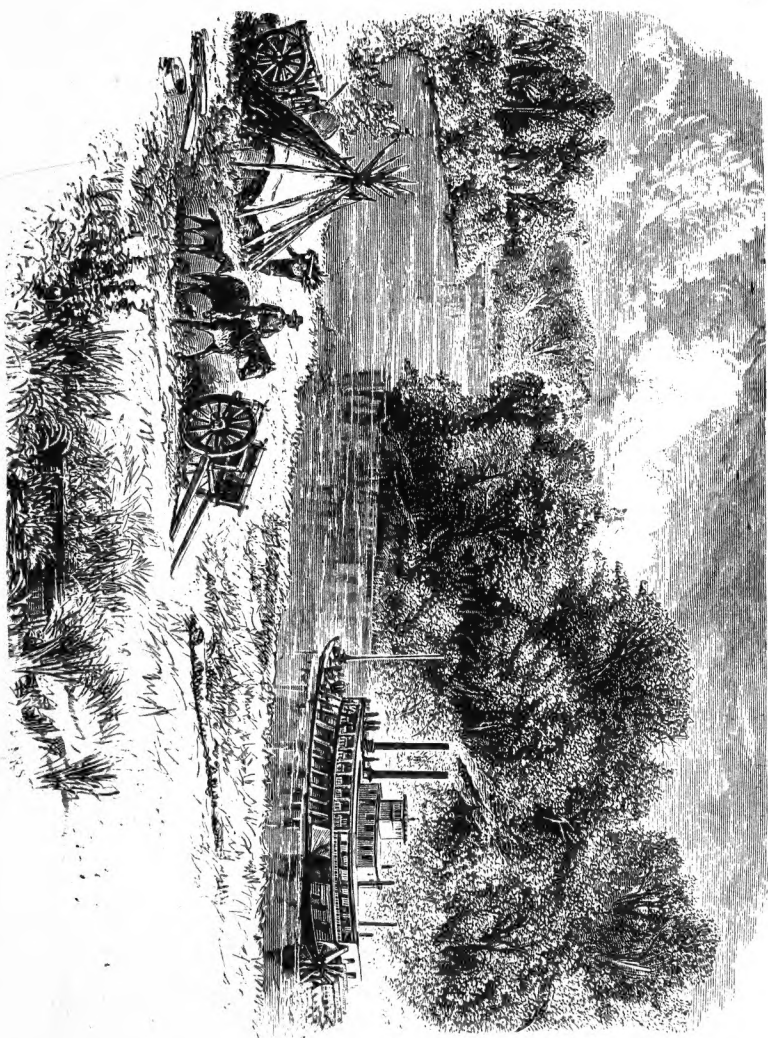
Isaac J. Bardick

F
612
R27B59

Ex LIBRIS
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTAENSIS



THE RED RIVER



RED RIVER, DAKOTA

LIFE ON THE
RED RIVER
OF THE NORTH

1857 to 1887

*Being the History of Navigation
on the Red River of the North*

By

FRED A. BILL

and

*Life on the River Towns
of Fargo and Moorhead*

By

J. W. RIGGS

Introduction and Preface

By

USHER L. BURDICK

— ◆◆ —

BALTIMORE
WIRTH BROTHERS
1947

Copyright 1947
By USHER L. BURDICK

**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA LIBRARY**

This book is privately printed and
limited to 750 copies, of which this is

Number-----

INTRODUCTION

In presenting *Life on the Red River 1859 to 1886*, being the *History of the Navigation of the Red River of the North* by Fred A. Bill, and *Life in the River Towns of Fargo and Moorhead* by J. W. Riggs, I have attempted to gather in one small volume the complete *Story of Life on the Red River* during the days of the "steamboats".

This complete story by Fred A. Bill is, without doubt, the most authentic history yet written on navigation of the Red River. Bill's complete history was published in the *Burlington Post*, Burlington, Iowa in 1928, the first number appearing June 30th and the last number appearing October 6th, 1928. This complete story was copyrighted by Fred A. Bill in 1928.

In 1934 I obtained copies of this newspaper story. What I received had been cut out of the *Burlington Post*. Seeing that the story had been copyrighted, I asked the Library of Congress, where the newspaper copies had been filed according to law, to see the newspapers. The copyright office had been moved to new quarters and these newspapers were completely lost, and have never been located to my knowledge.

In the January, 1928 number of the *North Dakota Historical Quarterly*, published at Bismarck, North Dakota I found extracts of the first part of the story published under the title "Steamboating on the Red River of the North." The second part of the Bill History the Society did not have. I sent them the entire story and in the January 1942 number of the *North Dakota Historical Quarterly* extracts from the second part were published and much of the first part was republished and copyrighted by the Society. The complete

story has not been published except in the Burlington Post. That newspaper has since 1928 gone out of business, the copyright copies of the paper have been lost.

In this volume I am presenting the entire story for the first time just as Fred A. Bill wrote it.

I obtained the story appearing here written by J. W. Riggs in 1932. I had several interviews with him in Minneapolis and it was a difficult thing to get his story, as it is to get information from old timers who have taken part in making history I have never seen one yet but who was very much opposed to talking about himself. After several interviews I asked Mr. Riggs to write out his story himself and this he did and the story appears here without corrections and without comments. It's a good story well written.

In getting the story from J. W. Hodges of Fargo which appears here I had a similar experience. He didn't want to talk about himself. I obtained one interview but I never could induce him to finish the story. I have written it up (what I obtained) just as he outlined it to me.

The history of steamboating on the Red River would not be complete without some mention of the outstanding builder on the river.

John S. Irish, father of Fred Irish of the First National Bank of Fargo, was the largest builder of Red River boats. He was born in Maine and learned the ship building business at Bangor and we quote his record here as furnished by his son Fred. "Father built a majority of the boats that plied the Red River from along in the late seventies until the close of navigation. From Maine he drifted to the Mississippi and followed

his trade on the upper reaches of that river, finally winding up at Stillwater where he had a boat yard and built a goodly number of steamboats and barges. From Stillwater he went to Taylor Falls and built boats. While at Taylor Falls he entered into a contract with Norman Kittson, agent of the Hudson's Bay Company and James J. Hill to build boats for them."

"Breckenridge was the head of navigation of the Red River and here father established a boat yard and at first built a number of barges for the Kittson-Hill interests. He also established a yard at Fort Garry and one at Grand Forks, and finally placed his permanent yards at Moorhead. Here he built the "Northwest" and the "Marquette" which were used on the Saskatchewan. These boats were run down the Red River to Hudson's Bay, then across the bay to the outlet of the Saskatchewan. These boats were used as gun-boats during Riel's Rebellion.

"He built a great number of boats and barges, dredges and snag boats. I think the finest boat he ever built was the "Henry W. Alsop" which was the most modern boat on the river. When river freighting was drawing to a close the "Alsop" was converted into a pleasure boat and was operated under the name of the City of Grand Forks."

I am indebted to the Historical Society of North Dakota for several of the photographs appearing here.

Dated at Williston, North Dakota
November 1st, 1947.

USHER L. BURDICK.

PREFACE

The Red River of the North has its beginning as a river at junction of the streams, Bois de Sioux and the Ottetail. This point is at Breckenridge, Minnesota, with Wahpeton, North Dakota on the west bank. The source of the river is, therefore the source of the two streams mentioned. The Bois de Sioux has its beginning at Lake Traverse, Minnesota and the Ottetail rises at Elbow Lake, Minnesota.

Concerning the earliest navigation of the Red River, we know very little except that the early voyagers speak of the river and the canoe trade carried on by Indians who inhabited the area. In the journals of Lord Selkirk's settlement at lower Fort Garry may be found an account of the purchase of the Red River Colony of seed grain at Prairie Du Chien, Wisconsin. The grain was transported in makinaw boats down a tributary to the Mississippi, up the Mississippi to the Minnesota River and then up that river to its source at Lake Traverse.

While both the Minnesota River and the Red River have their sources in the same chain of lakes, yet, there never was, nor is there now any boat communication between the two, except in times when melting snow or rains produce a sufficient freshet to create a stream between the two.

The Selkirk settlement shipment of grain, after arriving at the source of the river, was hauled overland across the landlocked connection, thence by water down the Bois de Sioux to the Red River. The transportation of this grain was in 1820 and appears to be the first attempt of white men to use the Red River as a means

of business communications. For the next thirty seven years there is no record of any further attempts to commercially navigate the Red River.

John B. Davis of St. Paul, owned a steamboat which he operated on the Mississippi north of St. Anthony Falls. This boat was called the "Freighter." In the spring of 1859 an attempt was made to run this boat up the Minnesota River, and at the portage, time the voyage to take advantage of the freshets usually due at that season of the year. Everything went as planned until the boat arrived at a point somewhat over half way across the portage, when the man at the wheel mistook the waters in a deep coulee for the main channel and ran the boat up this false channel for a few rods where it grounded. C. B. Thiemens was master of the boat. A Welshman was left in charge of the boat and he remained there for four years without any supplies except such as he could gather from the wild game of the neighborhood.

There are many conflicting reports as to who tried to put this boat into the Red River. George B. Winship, noted editor of the Grand Forks Herald, says "Captain Russell Blakeley and others bought this steamer, "The Freighter" at St. Paul, and took it up the Minnesota River."¹

The boat was afterwards sold by the sheriff and J. C. Burbank became the purchaser. The steamer was 125 feet long with a displacement of 200 tons.

The machinery of the "Freighter" was also purchased by J. C. Burbank, and hauled overland to Georgetown on the Red River, where it was installed in a new steamer called the "International." The machinery was

¹ This is erroneous, as John B. Davis was the owner at the time the attempt was made to take her into Lake Traverse.

hailed to Georgetown in the winter of 1860, and the "International" hulk was completed in 1861 and launched in the spring of 1862. ² The new boat was longer than the "Freighter" (137 feet,) but with less displacement (133 tons.) The reason for this was that the new boat was built to skim over shallow water.

Burbank found that The Hudson Bay Company furnished most of the shipping both up and down the river, and to compete with this trust was a losing proposition. Accordingly, he sold the "International" to the Hudson Bay Company in 1864. The last trip made by this steamer under the ownership of Burbank was made in 1863 when Captain Barrett brought her up from Fort Garry.

This account of the "Freighter" converted into the "International" is not an account of the first steamboat to ply the waters of the Red River, but the "International" is mentioned at this point because the attempt to put the "Freighter" on the Red River was made in June 1858, and Davis and Northrup were both trying to win the 3000 bonus. ¹

The first steamboat to actually steam thru the waters of Red River was the "Anson Northrup" and this boat accomplished this feat May 26, 1859.

The engine and machinery of this boat had a history. In 1851, this machinery and engine were shipped from Maine down the Atlantic Coast, into the Gulf of Mexico, up the Mississippi to St. Anthony Falls where it was installed in the "Governor Ramsey", the first steamboat built north of the Falls. Later this same machinery

² Geological and Natural History of Minnesota, Vol. I, page 134 and page 624, History of the Red River, page 568.

Note: ¹ Even if Davis had passed the "International" into Lake Traverse, still Northrup would have won by over 30 days time.

was installed in a new boat called the "North Star." Anson Northrup purchased this same machinery and in the winter of 1858 hauled it overland from the Mississippi to the Red River. The point of delivery was La Fayette, where the Sheyenne or Dakota river empties into the Red River of the North. The starting point was Crow Wing and by locating Crow Wing and La Fayette on a map, the general trek across the country with this machinery can be determined.

This was a huge undertaking in the dead of winter. ²

Anson Northrup received a bonus from St. Paul for being the first to run a steamboat on the Red River. It operated only a short time and was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1860 the boat was rebuilt under the name of the "Pioneer" and when finally dismantled the machinery was used in a saw mill at Grand Forks. The machinery and engine surely had a history—from Maine down the eastern seaboard into the Gulf of Mexico, up the Mississippi and into the "Governor Ramsey" at St. Anthony; then into the "North Star" operating above the falls; thence across the continental divide by ox teams; then into the "Anson Northrup"; then into the "Pioneer" and finally came to rest in a saw mill at Grand Forks, North Dakota.

The "Selkirk" was built by James J. Hill, Alexander Griggs and associates at McCauleyville in the winter of 1870-71. She was 110 feet long with a draft of 3 feet with a capacity of 120 tons. Here it will be noted that while the depth of the "International" was 5½ feet, this boat had a depth of 3 feet and navigated much more easily in shallow water.

Note: ² See History of the Red River Valley for details of this venture.

The "Pioneer" was nothing more or less than the old "International" rebuilt in 1860.

In 1872 the Hudson's Bay and the Hill Griggs interests were merged into one company called the Red River Transportation Company. Norman W. Kittson, agent for the Hudson's Bay Company negotiated the merger on the part of his company. When this merger took place the new company had two boats, the "Pioneer" and the "Selkirk". The new concern then built the "Dakota" and the "Alpha" at Breckenridge, the first being built in the winter of 1871-72 and the latter in the winter of 1873-74. The same winter the company built the "Cheyenne" at Grand Forks.

After this merger, the freight rates were raised and the business men at Winnipeg resented this tightly organized monopoly. Having petitioned the Red River Transportation Co. for lower rates with no satisfactory results, the business men decided to build their own line of steamboats. Accordingly in 1875 two boats were built at Fargo. The "Manitoba" and the "Minnesota", under the management of James Douglas, post master at Moorhead. These boats were alike in size and were framed on the Ohio river, knocked down shipped to Fargo and there set up. After making two trips the "Minnesota" was rammed and sunk by a boat belonging to the Red River Transportation Co. ¹ Becoming discouraged with their venture in transportation, the business men of Winnipeg sold the remaining boat, the "Manitoba" to the Hill, Hudson's Bay interests, and thus the first attempt to break up a monopoly in the Northwest, ended in failure.

Note: ¹ this was reported as an accident, but the circumstances are not altogether clear whether it actually was an accident. See Bill's story in this volume.

The Grandin Brothers, large farm operators in the Red River Valley, built the "J. L. Grandin" at Fargo in 1878. This was a large boat 125 feet long, 4 deep with a capacity of 220 tons, and was operated exclusively by the Grandin Brothers in transporting grain grown along the Red River, to Moorhead, Minnesota. When the railroads put river navigation out of business, the "J. L. Grandin" was hauled up on the banks of the Red River and there it ended its days.

The "Pluck" was built at Brainard and shipped to Fargo and set up by the Alsop Brothers in 1879-80. This was a small boat with a capacity of only 35 tons and operated from Breckenridge to Winnipeg.

The "W. H. Alsop", was built at Moorhead in 1881 by the Alsop brothers. It was built with a lightdraft but had a capacity of over 150 tons. This boat operated until 1886 when it went out of business.

The "Fram" which operated many years on the Red Lake river above Crookston, was knocked down, shipped overland and rebuilt at East Grand Forks in 1890.

The last business boat to be built on the Red River was the "Grand Forks" built at Grand Forks in 1895, the machinery of which was taken from the abandoned "W. H. Alsop" at Fargo.

All of these boats were doomed on the Red River just as river transportation on the Mississippi was doomed by the coming of the railroads. Every year the routes become shorter and shorter. Some of these boats did not give up without a struggle. The Assiboine River was tried, and the machinery of the Manitoba was taken to Saskatchewan and installed in a boat operating on the Atabaska River for about two years. The

Selkirk and the International were dismantled at Grand Forks. While some of these historic boats struggled along in river transportation, and were in some instances dismantled and their machinery placed in other boats on different rivers, all came to the same end—the Railroads had won the battle for transportation. Actually the Transportation business on the Red River closed in 1886 as a successful business venture, and those that struggled along for the next ten years travelled on sentiment and not revenue.



THE J. H. GRANDIN

J. W. RIGGS TELLS OF THE EARLY DAYS ON THE RED RIVER

When I first went to Moorhead and Fargo, in the spring of 1876 or 1877, both little cities were, of course, not much more than mushroom towns over-run with a motley array of floaters from everywhere. All told the population could not have exceeded two thousand. Anyway, the railroad had not been there long, the terminus being Bismarck. I remember about the first thing I did was to view the river from that narrow sidewalk on the Northern Pacific bridge, the only way of walking to Fargo, except over a little dilapidated wagon bridge just underneath the railroad bridge, which the boatmen used to tear down so they could get up the river to Breckenridge.

So this was it. Beneath me the "Raging Red," of which I had heard so much. Sensational stories of the Deadwood Dick sort, the Yellow Dime terribles of that day. Maybe you, yourself remember them as the shining lights of your youth. Then there was the "Deadwood Gulches"—the magnets that lured thousands to the golden meccas—Bismarck was one of these, an outfitting point for the hills. The river looked very deep to me, very swift, black and crooked, speeding northward, which indeed was strange. But a man of whom I asked assured me that it was perfectly all right for it to flow that way. It was evening and I was facing the North where some boats were tied up. The J. L. Grandin was at the Fargo dock—a big stern wheeler with smoke lazily rolling from its stacks. The rays of the sun were shining on its bell and some men were dragging aboard a gangplank. "She's going down to the farm, I guess," said my newfound acquaintance, meaning, as I learned afterward, the big Grandin Farm. Several other boats

were there beneath me, among them two barges and a new propeller for Lake Winnipeg. There was also, under construction, a Government dredge, the Unzer Fritz, which later on I saw at work in the river near Fargo. J. L. (or J. H.) was captain of the Grandin and the mate was J. Harry Eldridge, whom I later knew quite well. He died long ago. A pleasant gentleman from the East somewhere named Crockett (Colonel Crockett) was the clerk or purser of the Grandin, a boat maybe 100 feet long. There was a side-wheeler at the Moorhead dock, a smaller craft, a trim looking boat, which often ascended the river to Wahpeton and Breckenridge. It carried the name of Henry W. Alsop on its wheelhouse. There was also a smaller boat named the Little Bessie, a steamer, or rather propeller built and owned by Ralph DeCamp of Moorhead, and several rowboats and the like. Soon there was a ringing of bells and the smoke rolled upward, lazy like, forming a pretty picture, one I shall never forget; the boat finally rounded the bend and disappeared beyond the great trees at this season so green upon the banks. Myriad small butterflies (or what seemed to be such) were close about the shores of the river, white ones and yellow ones.

The steamers were wood burners. They were nearly always pushing barges loaded with some kind of freight, machinery, grain or livestock. Once I went on an excursion down river—the Grandin and barge, and there was music and dancing, and my girl's hair caught fire from some flying sparks from the stacks. Once I caught a mammoth catfish in the Red, so big that it could barely be forced into a washtub. Another time, one night when I was some distance from town, I heard the Grandin's whistle, and climbed into the branches of an overhanging elm and dropped to its hurricane

deck. Then I had supper with my friend Eldridge and rode into Fargo with him.

I do not remember seeing any brick buildings in Fargo in 1877, unless possibly the bank building was brick. This was on Front Street, and the Post Office was in the rear of it, the Postmaster's name was Grant. About the only other building of consequence was the Headquarters Hotel, used as a passenger station and eating house, a spacious affair, but there were smaller buildings along Front Street, and saloons galore. All that part of town known as N. P. Avenue was a prairie. Front Street was all of Fargo then, a town always on the move and full of business, the great Northwest, as it were, looming before it. Fargoans were a happy, whole-souled bunch of folk who had "thrown the key down the well"; it was a city of young blood, the sidewalks of which were always echoing with the footsteps of strangers, with the sound of saw and hammer on every hand. Moorhead, however, had three or four brick structures. One was the Bruns and Finkle building on Front Street; diagonally across from it was the Douglas Block which housed the Douglas Hardware Company and the Jas. H. Sharp Co., (dry goods.) S. Douglas was postmaster. The Moorhead schoolhouse was brick, and if I am not mistaken there was a brick residence north of town, and I believe it was the home of A. Holes. Just opposite the Bruns and Finkle building, which was a large general store, was the Bramble House, built and presided over by Captain C. P. Sloggy of Beloit, Wisconsin. The lumber for this house was hauled overland from St. Cloud by mules before the railroad came. The Bramble House was a mighty good hotel for those days or these either. Of course there were a number of lesser stores, also several saloons, and a newspaper in Moorhead—the Clay County Advocate, where I worked for

Burnaham and Partridge. Mr. F. J. Burnaham was the Editor of the Clay County Advocate as well as the leading attorney at that time. He came from somewhere in New Hampshire. Mr. S. Partridge was from England, an old resident of Moorhead, you might say, having been there since the railroad came six or seven years before. The Advocate office was located just off Front Street in what had been an old residence; within its crowded walls, where Mr. Partridge administered justice with one hand and directed the make-up of the paper with the other, I saw quite a bit of the coming empire. I heard more grief, signed my name as witness to more papers than I can remember, and saw more persons committed to jail, or fined or both than you would believe. Mr. Partridge, you understand, was a Justice of the Peace. He was also an officer in every lodge in town as well as being a church official, in which he took much interest. Mr. Partridge was also an official of the Minnesota State Fair.

One day a bunch of Indians from the White Earth Reservation walked in and seated themselves around the floors of the office and lit their pipes. Some church officials came in also, one of them Bishop Whipple of Fairbault, the others strangers. Mr. Partridge had been working for some time to get a school located in Moorhead. What made matters worse on me was the fact that this was edition day and all this crowd to step over. And as if by some evil intent or design, along came Major A. W. Edwards and Mr. Hall, who had just arrived in town and were planning to start a newspaper in Fargo. I remember the kindness and courtesy shown them by Mr. Partridge and by all other white men in that little, dingy, crowded office, but they remained only a few minutes. This incident will give you an idea of

the things we had to put up with in the office of the Advocate.

W. H. Davy is another man I remember quite well. Mr. S. G. Comstock, an attorney and member of the Minnesota Legislature, is another; also F. Jay Haynes of Flint, Michigan, a photographer whose gallery was the only one in both cities; it adjoined the Advocate office or rather was next to Davy's Store, which faced Front Street. And speaking of youth! Davy had a store, as I say, but he was such an enthusiast, such a whole-souled busy man, whooping this thing and that thing along, that he was seldom in his store. Haynes moved his gallery to Fargo and soon afterward was appointed official photographer for the Northern Pacific who built a specially equipped car for him. Haynes made all those fine views of Old Faithful and other park scenery that everyone has seen. I believe he is now in St. Paul, and has a gallery on Selby Avenue.

There were three church denominations in Moorhead, Presbyterian (Rev. O. H. Elmer), Episcopal (Rector C. H. Peak), and Catholic (Rev. Father McGolrick.)

I have heard a great deal about first settlers in Clay County (around Moorhead) but I believe that C. Probstfield was the first. Andrew Holes holds the title, but I overheard at one time that while Mr. Sam Partridge was still in England, years before he moved to America, he received literature with pictures of Probstfield's farm home. This must have been before the 70's as Partridge came to Moorhead in 1870. He died a number of years ago, his only survivor being a daughter, Mary, believed to be in Seattle.

Another old settler (now dead) was J. B. Blanchard, who held public office almost continuously from 1871

to the time of his death in 1916 at the age of 96 years. He was a nice, quiet man, a good citizen and a fearless officer who bore a sort of charmed life. His days were full of close calls. He was a native of Maine and removed to Monticello, Minnesota in the early days where he was in the lumber business. Mr. Blanchard was married four times. He told me once, in an offhand way, "children and fools always tell the truth, depend on it."

I never saw Mayor Johnson, although his sons live in Marine, Minnesota, just below Stillwater. A Mr. Chapin and a Mr. Erickson, who were very prominent in local affairs, built the Chapin and Erickson Hall which went down in the big fire years ago. This hall was considered a great achievement, a valuable addition to the community. Tickets to the opening ball sold at \$25. and half the town couldn't get in, but the acoustics were terrible. If you spoke in United States it sounded Portuguese. Finally it was decided to try stringing some wires across the ceiling, and the improvement was so great that a second opening was held. I remember it so well; some of the speeches "rocked the centuries," so to speak.

Another man deserving of mention is W. E. Truax, the Northern Pacific Railroad Agent at Moorhead; also (although regular operators were employed) a lightening jerker of no mean ability. Mr. Truax was not a politician, not a financier, not a real estate boomer, or any kind of enthusiast or given to sports except, perhaps, that he imported the first bicycle and could be seen most any day riding it about the streets of Fargo and Moorhead. But he certainly could play checkers—a celebrity in that line—a sort of a star, as the poet says, who was alone and "dwelt apart." He played with

his eyes shut; with his back to the board; blindfolded, or with his feet, or by telegraph with some opponent he did not know and didn't care to know, such a phenomenal memory was his. And the strangest part of it was, he didn't seem to appreciate this fact or even dream that he might have made an everlasting name and fortune for himself in vaudeville. I have watched him play by telegraph on a board miles away and even with no board at all before him as a guide; a simple, way, apparently, until you try it. Truax would let his opponent know his move. The opponent would tick back his move and so on, Truax, with a smile on his face, his feet on the table and one hand on the key. The opponent might wait a minute sometimes, but Truax would never wait; instantly he would tick back his move. Betting was safe here if you could only find somebody to put his money on the other fellow.

Not many amusement companies ventured so far from the larger cities, but upon one occasion at least, the well-remembered Billy Marble and his troupers played several nights in Fargo in a hall on lower Front Street before the Chapin and Erickson Hall was built. Once a very good company from California played "Rip Van Winkle" in the Chapin and Erickson Hall. The Moorhead Dramatic Club also played there once, their orchestra being the McHumphrey and Race String Band of Fargo, the orchestra deluxe back in the 70's and 80's. A long time prior to this a circus ventured as far as Winnipeg and went broke there, the Canadians seizing it for debt, and the performers who could, got back as far as Fargo by boat. A man in Moorhead felt sorry for them and finally put up some money and staked a few of them for a trip East. The show opened in an old barn-like structure in Moorhead, but with no crowd to mention. Their show consisted mainly of

trapeze artists, tumblers and a clown. I believe the sponsor's name was Chas. Nichols. I recall how, during the show, one of the trapeze artists hit his head a resounding blow on a low-hanging rafter. I remember the low moan that could be heard through the audience, and the instant's quiet before his body struck the floor. The show went on even though the man was seriously injured.

Meantime, on lower Front Street, Fargo, in a low-ceilinged, long, narrow, firetrap of a building, the front of which was a saloon, a nightly vaudeville or "variety" show was coining money. Reynolds was the proprietor's name, and the admission was 15c. The place was always jammed full of patrons, until finally Mr. Reynolds erected in the rear of the room a sort of circus seat ampitheater or balcony so the patrons might applaud with their feet by kicking the ceiling. Liquors were served throughout the performance and one could almost cut the cigar smoke with a cheeseknife, but the shows were fine. I remember they were so good that, as in a prizefight, you would often let go with a yell of delight at the seemingly original and pat jokes of the day, the really excellent comedy work of Joe Guerin (Dutch Comedian), Charles Pomeroy (Negro Comedian) and Libbie Marietta, another comedienne, whom nobody will ever forget, as well as many others whose names have escaped me. Much was heard in those times of gold—the golden grain—the golden harvest—the gold of the mines, and other golden things, but the only time I ever witnessed a literal rain of gold was when, one night, a party of English tourists were scattered about the audience of Reynolds' Varieties. They shouted themselves hoarse; they stood up and yelled and sang songs with the actors; they stood up in their seats and threw gold and silver money at the feet of the players.

I recall how some of it tinkled like little silver bells as it fell to the floor in front of them. Long after that occasion, whenever one went there, you were sure to hear delicate allusions to this, with the invitation to repeat the performance, and that even nickels and dimes would be welcome, but I have never before nor since seen the equal of this rain of gold and silver.

There have been many changes since the old days of the Red River valley. I close my eyes and with all the fantastic swiftness of a dream there unrolls a magic carpet of the prairies; its wildflowers, and mile upon mile of waving grain. The very smell of it as well as the smell of morning is mine again; the clear, still air, and apparently suspended in it a little town that is not there at all, but miles away, the well-remembered voices of those you used to know, blended with the songs of birds, that you will never hear again except in memory. I can hear the roar and tremble of winter winds, too, and see snows piling up. Maybe for days at a time when you crossed the street, you had to hold a rope for guidance. The storms were so terrible that you are set down as a liar nowadays if you even speak of them. Now that the valley is more heavily populated, these fierce storms seem to have disappeared. I remember, however, beautiful weather when the mercury hovered around zero for weeks at a time. Then again there were days when some of Byrd's experiences seem inconsequential. For instance, we had three days of 59 and 63 below zero, and not a breath stirring. This was December 30 and 31 in 1878 and January 1, 1879.

About this time a friend of mine got married. He and his intended walked to Fargo and back in this weather and never knew the difference. They went before a justice of the peace, whose name I have forgotten, but

who asked "Walter, do you love her?" "Yessir," was the reply. Turning to the lady the justice inquired: "And you love Walter, don't you, Dora?" "I sure do," was the smiling reply. "Walter, Two dollars please," said the justice. The next morning the happy pair might have been seen frying their pancakes and bacon in the rear of the bridegroom's little store.

I will also mention the heat of the summers. However, there was plenty of rain to offset the heat, and the nights were delightfully cool. I have eaten sweetpotatoes grown on the Fargo side of the river by Captain C. P. Sloggy on his farm. He also grew watermelons and strawberries. Once a big rattlesnake was killed there, the first ever known in the valley at this time. Words cannot picture the beautiful summer evenings, nor the ever-changing beauties in the clouds at sunset and under the light of the moon. Many times when younger I wondered if I would ever see this wilderness in bloom and if the two polished streaks of steel then leading to the terminus of the Northern Pacific would ever be extended to that land of everybody's dreams—the Western Coast.

As I remember Fargo and Moorhead, there was very little crime in that community. There were no really big thundering newspapers loaded to the gunwales with everything that youth should not read, no telephones, no electric lights; Edison had not been heard of, nor Henry Ford, nor other people of note in the so-called civilized world.

There were no picture shows to let the boys know how banditry is pulled off, not even bridge games; the youths could play poker all right—or billiards. Consequently, one summer evening when a stranger alighted from an eastern train, proceeded to a resort on Front

Street, went inside, and, after a few words, shot to death a rather prepossessing woman, escaping over the river to Fargo, there was more excitement than there would be now if a gang rode in and shot up the whole town. Blanchard, U. S. Marshall got quick action on this fellow, whose name was Vandecar, he went directly and got him, but not without a struggle and another attempted killing. Vandecar tried to fire twice, but miraculously the gun didn't go off. I never heard Mr. Blanchard make many comments save that "he guessed he never was meant to be shot." On the afternoon of the day that President Rutherford B. Hayes, on his way to visit the Dalrymple farm, stepped down from his private car to address the small gathering of Moorhead's citizens, Vandecar broke jail and never was recaptured, nor was he ever heard of again. The girl was buried in the Moorhead cemetery.

The first newspaper in Fargo was edited and published by E. B. Chambers of Chicago. It was located on Northern Pacific Avenue, then a prairie. Chambers was a number one newspaperman and had a good office for that time, but like all other newspaper offices of that day, it had a Washington hand press. At that time also a Mr. Carson, who established the Red River Valley Independent on Front Street, came to Fargo. He was considered a novice at the game, but he was a whole-souled, ambitious man and very anxious to make a monument for himself as having the best plant in the territory. He was somewhat lavish with his money as was evidenced by his putting in a new Cottrell and Babcock press. At about this time, 1878, A. W. Edwards, also of Chicago, and a man named Hall, referred to above, established in Fargo the Republican, which proved not only an excellent sheet typographically but was newsy as well, and from the first enjoyed a good

patronage. The well equipped office of the Republican was in a building on Front Street, not far from the Headquarters Hotel. For some reason the partnership disagreed, or so it was understood, one of them saying one day that he would either buy or sell, he didn't give a whoop which, and went outside. When he returned from lunch the money was waiting and he stepped down and out.

Immediately preparations for the publication of the Daily Argus were under way, its home being close to the Republican office, but made up of several lesser buildings moved together to make one. Jealous eyes watched all this, jealous predictions were rife, but, nevertheless, the Argus flourished. A morning sheet, about a 6—column folio, at first it became one of the liveliest papers in the West and became well known through its snappy headlines, which were, for the most part, poetical, the telegraph and managing editor being Goldie West of London. Confusion reigned here, so meager the facilities and so crowded the quarters, script type next to heavy gothic was even used in the ads; sometimes the cases became woefully mixed. Nevertheless, while this may have looked surprising and was surely unfavorably commented upon, you couldn't help admiring the determination to keep going, to get the confoundedly big territory, split up into at least two states, and it wanted Grant for President, and wanted lots of other things. In language both beautiful and bitter, and headed with poetry, the Argus never missed an opportunity to lambast friend or foe, its choicest sarcasm being reserved for Chambers, the Republican and for the Independent. One day Stanley Huntley, the "Spoopendyke" of the Brooklyn Eagle, who had arrived in Bismarck to try and improve his failing health, having watched the three-cornered fight, without apparent

reason, joined the chase after the unhappy Carson. With his inimitable "both barrels," Huntley referred to him as "the original slinger of slang and the individual that borrowed our roosters," whatever that meant. Then one night just as Reynolds' Varieties closed up shop and part of the audience was on its way uptown, the Republican office burst into flames. Some of the crowd rushed inside, and, in their efforts to save something, what they didn't do to the shop isn't much. Paraphernalia was hoisted into the snowbanks about as lively as a country schoolmarm' hikes home for dinner. The wind blew a gale but fortunately, a miracle, perhaps, the Argus was never touched. Goldie West's office was behind a door where he had a little table piled high with newspapers and copy and where he kept his stuff weighted down with a Railroad spike and a six-shooter. Just the briefest notice of the fire appeared in print.

Following is one of the famous poetical headlines:

O, THE SNOW!

The Bee-a-utiful Snow! It made Last Night
So Jolly, you Know

Belating the Trains and Grounding the Wires
As Blizzarding over the Land
It Fires.

Oh, Give Us A Chance With A Big, Sharp
Hoe at the Son-of-a-Gun Who
Wrote Beautiful Snow.

I do not know what became of Carson, but he was a nice man who just couldn't make a go of it, no matter



RED RIVER OX CART, 1872

how he tried, no matter how much money he spent. His personality was all right, his heart was all right, but somehow his efforts didn't click. He did one thing, however, that deserves noting: His first mammoth boom edition, a fine appearing number, was the very first steam-printed paper in the Territory of Dakota, a threshing engine, in the street, belted up to that big press, did the job.



STEAMER DAKOTA, MOORHEAD LEVEE

LIFE ON THE RED RIVER AS TOLD BY JAMES WRAY HOGGES

There are few living men who can link the days of the supreme reign of the Hudson Bay Company with the present. For two hundred years this powerful company held sway in the region West from Montreal, finally reaching the Pacific Ocean, and extending southward in what is now the United States as far as the four northern tiers of counties in North Dakota. Not until 1870 did they surrender their proprietary rights to the Dominion of Canada. They carried on an extensive and profitable business in furs and at most stages of their history they held an absolute monopoly. They were the guardians of the lives and liberties of the people inhabiting their dominions, and the lives and liberties of the people were as secure as was the judgment of the officers of this organization. Men were tried for crimes and for their lives and were executed by the order of the officers. After the merger of the Northwest Fur Company with the Hudson Bay Company, 1821, the latter company remained the absolute monarch over half of the territory of the North American continent.

James Wray Hogges was born in British America in the vicinity of Ft. Garry (Winnipeg) January 23, 1869, the son of George Washington Hogges, a native of Kentucky. His mother was Margaret Demray, born in Manitoba, of Scotch-English origin. Her father was one of the colonists brought over from England by Lord Selkirk.

George Washington Hogges, served in the Mexican War in 1848, and after the war drifted north. He visited his uncle, James Finley Wray in Philadelphia and it was there that the two decided to go to the

Great Northwest and engage in the fur business. They came to Ft. Garry in 1857, and engaged in the fur business on an independent basis for a time, but the power wielded by the Hudson Bay Company was too strong competition for them. The Company made their own prices on the furs and also on the supplies which they must buy, and as these men were independent agents, the Company naturally took profits from them both ways, until they had nothing left for themselves. The uncle moved farther south in the territory known, then, to be the United States, and settled on an island in the Mississippi River south of where St. Cloud, Minnesota, is now located. George Washington Hogges remained in the North and went to work as a clerk for the Hudson Bay Company, in whose employ he remained until the Company dissolved in 1870.

It was while his father was employed in the office of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Garry that the subject of this sketch, James Wray Hogges, was born. In the fall of 1870 the Hogges family went to St. Cloud, with a company of soldiers going to Ft. Snelling, and stayed over the winter with uncle James Finley Wray on the island south of St. Cloud. In the spring of 1871 the family moved back to where the father (George Washington) was engaged in the contract business. This trip was made from St. Cloud by the Red River Cart route. In the very early days ponies were used on carts instead of oxen. After the oxen days, mules and horses were used.

The family took up residence in a discarded box car located on the Moorhead bank of the Red River, and here James was raised as a boy. He has never left the vicinity where he was raised and now resides at 501 First Avenue, North at Fargo. He married Stella Murray and to this union one daughter was born, Mrs.

James Adler of Chicago. In 1888 James entered the contract business and has followed that business ever since. He came by this trade naturally for his father upon arriving at Moorhead in 1871 engaged in contract work, building bridges and ditches.

In those days, says Hogges, there was a military post along the Red River every 20 miles. The posts were built of logs set up endwise forming stockades. At that time there was no Fargo, except a few shacks on the West Side of the River. The Northern Pacific bridge was built across the Red in 1873, and Fargo really dates from that time. During the years 1873-74-75 a great many barges and steamboats were built on the Moorhead side of the river, and the transportation traffic on the river was then in its full bloom. Thousands of Dukaboars, Menonites were taken down the river from Moorhead to Ft. Garry, and the steamboat business flourished. The supplies for the Great North country came overland from St. Cloud by the Red River Cart route, and were loaded on boats at Moorhead and thence taken North and distributed to settlers and posts.

Some of the boats then in service were the Selkirk, the International, the Grandin, the Pluck, and the Alsop.

Hogges says that it was not uncommon in those days to see a train of 200 carts coming in from the North or coming back from St. Cloud. He could always tell when the train was coming before it got within three miles of the landing, for the squeaking of the ungreased Red River carts could be heard for miles.

There was no law in those days except a gun and even then justice was dealt out in a way that satisfied everybody, and there was better law and order then than there is now. Pierre was the nearest court, and with small matters such as thieving and horse-stealing,

the people never bothered the court. When the horse-thief was rounded up, three wagon tongues were set upright, triangularly, and on this tripod the thief was hung. In 1873 seven such hangings so occurred along the Red River from Moorhead north. The first Justice of the Peace in the territory was J. B. Blanchard, also the first U. S. Marshall. Hogges thinks the change in 60 years has been bad. In the early days all citizens carried guns for their self-protection and it was very rare when that necessary self-protection was not forthcoming. "Now days," says Hogges, "the good citizen cannot carry a gun and the gangsters carry them all. It isn't fair play."

Judge Ira Mills is the first Territorial Judge that Hogges remembers, but there wasn't much work for the court to do, as the people disposed of their own cases. Thieving was rare among Western people, but among the riff-raff that came in from New York and Chicago, there wasn't anything these people wouldn't do. Bruns and Finkle built the first flour mill in the country and located it at Moorhead. Captain Briggs ran a line of steam boats.

Chapin was the first contractor who built any buildings of any size in Fargo. On the ground where the library is now located, he erected the Continental Hotel.

The winter of 1874-75 was the worst winter he ever saw and guests froze to death in lodging houses along the river. It was 60 below for days at a time and such blizzards raging prevented the gathering of fuel. Buffalo were plentiful in the region of the Pembina and Turtle Mountains and dried buffalo meat was the principal source of food. Pumican, as a summer meat, was much better than bacon.

Asked about the effects of the panic of 1872, Hogges

says that the people here never noticed it. Flour was high—\$12.00 per barrel at St. Paul, and the buyer hauled it himself. Generally the shortage of money didn't effect the people. The only money in circulation was silver, gold and paper scrip money in denominations of 10 and 25 cents. For ordinary business, money was not needed. The gamblers used it more than any other class. When furs were delivered, they were paid for in supplies, and when the trader purchased goods at St. Paul, he turned in his furs in payment. Buffalo hides were the most common media of circulation, having a fixed value of \$3.00 for prime robes.

Speaking of money, Hogges relates that while his father was building a bridge for the Great Northern, James J. Hill, later railroad magnate, visited him and inquired how he was able to pay his men without money. George Hogges replied that he didn't need money as the men traded at the traders store and always took orders on the store, signed by him. Mr. Hill then remarked, "George, you should have some cash, for an emergency," and with that remark pulled the lining paper out of a nail keg and wrote an order on a St. Paul bank for \$2,000.00 and delivered the document to Hogges. "In a few days," said Hill, "Judge Blanchard will deliver you the money if you deliver him that piece of paper." In a few days Hogges delivered the paper and received \$2,000.00 in gold.

In the spring of 1876, while Custer was camped on the West Side of the River, he visited the elder Hogges and endeavored to make a contract with him to accompany his Seventh Cavalry out in the Indian Country as interpreter, as Hogges could speak both Sioux and Chippewa. Hogges then said, "General, how big an outfit have you?" "We have," said Custer, "four hundred men with us, and we will be joined by 200 more at

Fort Lincoln." "Not on your life," said Hogges, "you haven't a big enough Army; there are thousands of Indians camped out West waiting for the Army, and I am not going into a set-up of that kind, without a sufficient force." Custer failed to shake George in this stand, and shortly left to join his command. On July 2, 1876, George Hogges read in the Chicago papers of the complete annihilation of Custer's Command in the Valley of the Little Big Horn.

He remembers some amusing and stirring incidents that will be related here in the order told. In the spring of '73, James J. Hill was operating express on the Red River, and one day stopped at the pump station on the Moorhead side to get a drink of water, and in doing so, slipped off the scaffolding and fell in the mud and water. Thoroughly soaked, he went to George Hogges' house and got a change of clothing while his own were washed and dried out. "If I could have only met Louis Hill," said Hogges, "when they were visiting the Northwest in search of names for the passenger coaches, I surely would have asked to have a car named after my father, George Hogges."

In the spring of 1876, while playing along the street, Hogges saw a man run out of a saloon followed by another man, who was shooting at the first. Soon the first man fell in the grass, and as he lay there, he fired several shots at the man in pursuit, and he fell. Just at this time James' mother came out and said "Son, what are those men doing?" "Just popping at each other, Ma." Soon a crowd gathered and it was discovered that both men were dead. The men were both gamblers named Shank and Shumway, who had gotten into a row in the saloon.

(At this point the old timer began to show signs of uneasiness in waiting for these notes to be taken, and postponed the balance of the story to a later date.)

FROM A VETERAN OF THE HUDSON BAY TRADING COMPANY

PINE BLUFF RANCH, GRAND FORKS, B. C.,
June 21, 1928.—Editor Post: I have the pleasure to acknowledge your letter of 15th instant. I have kept Fred A. Bill's article on the Early Navigation on The Red River from The Historical Society of the State of North Dakota in pamphlet form. I understand from Capt. Bill that much new matter has been incorporated in the draft you will now publish. The author and I were in Dakota Territory together 56 years ago, he as an officer of the Red River Transportation Company and I as an officer in the Hudson's Bay Company in charge of the transportation from the Mississippi River to Lake Erie. We fought mosquitoes and rustled feed together where what is now the State of North Dakota and Northern Minnesota contained only the 188th part of a white person to the square mile and to make this average had to include Joe Peso, the illegitimate offspring of a female Dogger Indian, and a Mexican cow puncher and his family consisting of a squaw and half a dozen kids and his train of dogs with which he drove the Earl of Strathcona, whose maiden name was Donald, then Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, from my post Georgetown, to Fort Garry in 1870 when Louis Reil was the Regal Monarch in Prince Rupert's Land. Capt. Bill is one of my most esteemed friends and although our paths have not crossed for nearly half a century we have corresponded and his writings are now interesting to me. There are great changes since the days he writes about. I once stood on the site of Sioux City in your State and the only sign of life in Nebraska was a bunch of wild horses.

I spent the early years of my manhood harvesting a

bountiful crop of the skunk, of the bear, the beaver and the bison in the North for the great company of adventurers of English, trading around Hudson's Bay, and I am now, or soon will be, harvesting a crop of the forbidden fruit for the lesson of which our first parents got fired out of the first orchard that we have any record of. Incidentally I am also writing a History of the Pioneer Days and Ways in Minnesota, Dakota and Prince Rupert's Land.

Published in THE BURLINGTON POST
Iowa, Beginning June 30, 1928

Copyright 1928 by
FRED A. BILL
Published in BURLINGTON POST 1928

NAVIGATION ON RED RIVER OF THE NORTH

Beginning June 30, 1928 - Ending October 6, 1928
By Captain Fred A. Bill, St. Paul, Minn.

CHAPTER I.

Steamboat operation on all the navigable streams of the United States was worked to capacity during the early periods of the settlement of the various sections of the country and at one time a number of rivers, now hardly worthy of the name of creek, were much used for commercial navigation. To the existence of these streams is due much of the rapid advancement of the adjacent country over sections not so favored in natural transportation facilities.

This is especially true of Minnesota and this section of the northwest. The navigation of the Mississippi, both above and below the Falls of St. Anthony, the Minnesota and St. Croix rivers placed Minnesota years in advance of where she would have been but for the existence of these streams. Northwestern Minnesota and eastern North Dakota are much more advanced than they would have been but for the Red River of the North and to that same stream Manitoba and adjacent territory owes much of its present prestige. True, the coming of the railroad proved the death blow to numerous prosperous river communities, but the country as a whole still profits by the early use of these streams.

THE RIVER.

Red River of the North is formed by the junction of the Bois de Sioux and Otter Tail rivers at Breckenridge, Minnesota, with Wahpehton on the North Dakota side of the stream. The Otter Tail has its source in

Elbow Lake some 80 miles, as the crow flies, northeast from Breckenridge. This lake is not far from the source of the Mississippi and is some 20 feet higher than Lake Itasca. The Bois de Sioux comes from Lake Traverse, some 35 miles south of Breckenridge. Some map makers continue Red River from Breckenridge to Elbow Lake but such extension is not recognized by the United States Engineers and we have never seen any authority for the elimination of Otter Tail river.

From Breckenridge the stream flows practically due north, dividing the states of Minnesota and North Dakota, into the Province of Manitoba to its confluence with Lake Winnipeg; its waters finally reaching Hudson Bay.

EARLY BOATING.

The first mention of navigation on Red River we can find was by some people from the settlement of Lord Selkirk, at Lower Fort Garry, who went to Prairie du Chien, now in the state of Wisconsin, in the winter of 1819-20 to purchase seed grain. The party started on the return trip April 20, 1820 in three Mackinaw boats loaded with 200 bushels of wheat, 100 bushels of oats and 30 bushels of peas and in May ascended the Minnesota river to its source; dragged the boats and their loads over the portage into Lake Traverse and descended the Bois de Sioux and Red Rivers to their homes which they reached in June, 1820.

Later when the country had become sparsely settled, freight was hauled to the river from St. Paul by teams and taken down the river on flat boats, the boats on arrival at destination being knocked to pieces and the lumber sold. In fact this method of transportation was in effect for some time after the advent of steamboats on the river.

FIRST STEAMBOAT.

The first practical move to establish steam navigation was made in 1858 when Captain Russell Blakeley, at the instance of the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce, made a tour of investigation of the river and returned with a report that navigation for several months in the year was practical.

After the report was made, public interest was aroused and the matter discussed in business and steamboat circles and the presumption is that the Chamber of Commerce asked for proposals from those interested for the installation of a boat on Red River for at a meeting held on Saturday, January 22, 1859 the Chamber had before it these two propositions:

Captain Maxwell, of the steamer Wave, which he had been operating on the Minnesota river, proposed to take his steamer across the isthmus between Lakes Big Stone and Traverse and place her in Red River as soon as possible after the opening of navigation for the sum of \$3,000.00, failing in which he would forfeit his boat, which he valued at a similar amount.

Mr. Anson Northrup proposed to deliver the steamer Anson Northrup, which had formerly borne the name of North Star, then in the waters of Crow Wing river, near the mouth of Gull river, at some convenient point on Red River for the sum of \$2,000.00. To do this he would transport the machinery, boiler, etc. across the country and construct a hull on Red River not less than 100 feet long and 20 feet beam and have a boat suitable to carry freight and passengers and be safe and seaworthy ready for operation by April 15, 1859.

After proper consideration the following was unanimously adopted:

“Resolved, That the Chamber of Commerce of St. Paul hereby offers a bonus of one thousand dollars to any responsible party who will engage and give satisfactory security to put a steamboat of one hundred tons burden on the Red River of the North and successfully run the same on said river during the navigable season of the present year, commencing trips on or before June 1st next. That the President and Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce are authorized to carry into effect this resolution with Anson Northrup, Esq., or if he should decline, with any other responsible party.

“Resolved, That in view of the extensive system of rivers and lakes of which the Red River of the North is a part, that one steamer on said waters would create or enhance the necessity for others, that at least three steamboats should be placed on said river the present season, and that the Chamber of Commerce of St. Paul hereby make an open offer of five hundred dollars to each and every steamboat that shall successfully navigate said river during the present season.”

While we have no record of an official acceptance of the proposition made by the Chamber or of any signed contract, Northrup at once got busy. He engaged Captain Augustus R. Young and Jesse B. Young to do the mechanical work and went to Gull river at once.

Augustus R. Young had accompanied the machinery then in the Anson Northrup from Bangor, Maine, where it was constructed, by sailing vessel to New Orleans and thence by steamer to St. Anthony, Minnesota, where he installed it in the Governor Ramsey, the first steamboat built above the Falls of St. Anthony, in 1850. Jesse B. Young, his brother, also assisted in the construction of that boat and both were first class engineers and mechanics.

The cabin and machinery of the Anson Northrup were taken apart; lumber for a new hull was cut at the Chapman mill on Gull river; the route laid out and arrangements made for supplies and teams. Northrup also furnished the required security that he could complete his contract.

The exact date of the start on this memorable trip we do not know but an item in the St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat in its issue of March 13th, 1859, says that the expedition left Leaf river, in what is now Wadena county, on February 21st, and then consisted of 13 yoke of oxen, 17 span of horses and 30 men. Among the men were Augustus and J. B. Young, Baldwin Olmstead, a Mr. Morse and Lewis Stone, all reliable and resolute men on whom the enterprise depended. They were then some 140 miles from their destination which it was hoped would be reached by March 20th.

In these days of autos, airplanes, luxurious pullmans and the means of getting from place to place in a very easy and comfortable manner, it is hard to grasp the extent of Mr. Northrup's undertaking. Moving such a mass of material in the dead of winter over laid out roads with comfortable and convenient stopping places would be no ordinary undertaking. In this case the route was through an almost unbroken country, practically uninhabited. Nearly every thing required had to be taken along and it was no ordinary forethought that provided those necessities. Add to this storms, extreme cold weather and the floundering through numerous snow drifts and perhaps we get a vague idea of what these people endured. It is evident that there were no mollycoddles in this party.

CHAPTER II.

About this time some one raised the question as to whether operating a boat on Red River would pay. This was answered by the publication of a letter from the Hudson Bay Company to Burbank and Company as a starter :

"I beg to inform you that we are now preparing to forward supplies to Red River settlement via St. Paul this coming season and that we shall call on your good offices to attend to their reception and transmission. There will be about 120 tons of goods from England and probably 30 tons of tobacco, sugar, etc. from New York. The English goods will be sent by Canadian Line of Steamers and Grand Trunk railway in three consignments of about 40 tons each; the first will be shipped from Liverpool about the end of April (should reach St. Paul early in June); the second about the middle and the third about the end of May. The goods from New York will be dispatched about the opening of navigation.

"We propose to employ about 100 ox carts of our own in the transportation from St. Paul, equal to, say, 40 tons (800 pieces of 100 pounds each) each trip; to make three trips if they have to go all the way to Fort Garry. I hope, however, that water conveyance may be arranged from, say, Breckenridge downwards, in which case I presume the carts could perform double the number of trips."

According to the Pioneer and Democrat of June 15, 1859, on May 19th, exactly seven weeks after Mr. Northrup arrived at La Fayette, at the mouth of the Sheyenne river, at 10:45 A. M. the new boat slid into the turbid waters of Red River with all due ceremonies, including the breaking of a bottle by C. L. Northrup, Mr. Northrup's oldest son.

Northrup wanted to name the boat the Pioneer but the men who had stood by the enterprise demurred and insisted that she be called the Anson Northrup, and he consented.

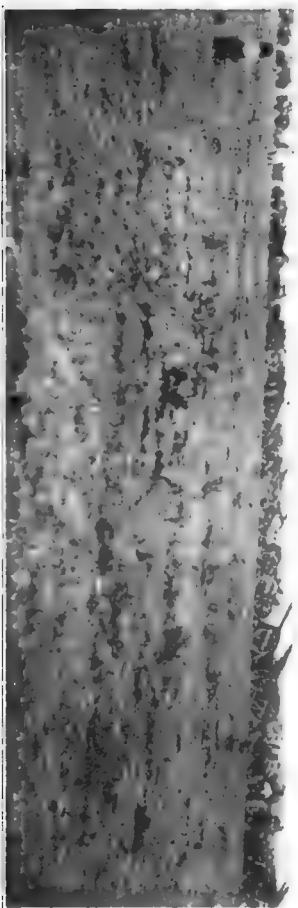
THE ANSON NORTHRUP'S FIRST TRIP.

On the afternoon of the 26th, after a trial trip to Shyenenne City, she left up river for Fort Abercrombie. The second day she reached East Burlington, at the mouth of upper Wild Rice river, and took on some wood that had been cut by the patriotic citizens of that place for her, and reached Fort Abercrombie on the 29th. It was the intention to return down river the next day but the Post Commander offered to furnish lumber to finish her cabin so she remained there a few days.

The first notice we have been able to find regarding her movements after arrival at Fort Abercrombie is in the St. Cloud Democrat of June 16, 1859: STEAM-BOAT ON THE RED RIVER.

"Hurrah, boys! The editor is out and Joseph Whitman has just returned from Fort Abercrombie and Fergus Falls bringing news that the Anson Northrup is afloat and steaming it, like thunder, up and down Red River. Hurrah! Take off your hats and lets give three times for the American Eagle, Captain Northrup and the everlasting Northwest. The first steamer is going it on the Red River of the North, and three devils of the St. Cloud Democrat are the first to get the important news into print. Here goes! Let's hurrah once more for printer's Devils and vote all editors supernumeraries, in all Western Printing offices, from this time forth!

"The Anson Northrup left Breckenridge for the Selkirk Settlement on the 4th, inst., and runs like a beauty.



CAMP OF PEMBINA HALF-BREDS
SHOWING A TRAIN OF RED RIVER CARTS

Hurrah for the Anson Northrup and the Three Imps."

This is the first mention of the Anson Northrup having been at Breckenridge and we might question the accuracy of the statement by the "Imps" considering that in the exuberance of feeling at being "in charge" they might have their towns and dates mixed, but for the following in the St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat of July 6th:

"The Anson Northrup left Breckenridge on the 5th of June for Fort Garry; was at Pembina on the 8th, and arrived at Fort Garry on the 9th."

Here she received a warm welcome and made an excursion to Lake Winnipeg on which she carried a large number of passengers. She left on the return trip on June 15th, with 17 passengers, including a number of ladies. On arrival at Fort Abercrombie she was laid up and placed in charge of a carpenter named Claghorn and Northrup and his crew returned to St. Paul, taking the passengers with them with the teams that had been kept there since winter.

This ended Mr. Northrup's connection with the boat. While he had constructed the boat as per agreement, he did not operate here during the season of navigation. Captain Russell Blakeley in his article entitled "Opening of the Red River of the North to Commerce and Civilization" is authority that the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce paid Mr. Northrup the sum of \$2,000.00, so that institution perhaps figured that he had earned the money.

There is no record of the officers of the boat on this first trip. Northrup was a contractor and general "all round" man but had little knowledge of steamboating. A. R. and J. B. Young were practical river men both as navigators and engineers and it is reasonable to pre-

sume that to them was given the task of commanding, piloting and engineering the Anson Northrup on her first trip.

As an echo of her first trip an article in the Toronto Globe of July 9, 1859 tells us that on arrival at Fort Garry she was greeted with joy; that she was 90 feet long, 22 feet beam and drew 14 inches of water light and was: "comfortably supplied with staterooms and the passengers were much pleased with the boat."

The Globe continues: "James Ross, of Red River, was a passenger and says they were 8 days from Fort Garry to Fort Abercrombie—laying up nights to cut wood—; 6 days by ox team to Swan river; 2 days to St. Paul by stage; 48 hours to La Crosse and in all to Toronto 18 days (during which they laid over 3 days) which was the quickest trip on record. Total fare, \$40.00."

The Pioneer and Democrat commenting says that when Burbank has his line in operation that the time between Toronto and Fort Garry will be reduced to 9 days.

The building of the Anson Northrup had attracted much attention to Red River and St. Paul was already reaping some benefit. The Pioneer and Democrat in its issue of July 17, 1859 tells of the value of this trade and says: "We executed last week an order for the first job printing ever turned out for the Selkirk settlement. In a few years the trade of that country will afford employment to hundreds of St. Paul merchants."

At this time a good deal of attention was being given to Manitoba in the United States. In the winter of 1857-58 arrangements were made with the Secretary of the U. S. Treasury that would enable the Hudson Bay Company to ship its goods to Fort Garry in bond through

the United States via St. Paul. Some shipments were made during the summer of 1858 and taken from St. Paul by Hudson Bay carts.

It was rumored that the Hudson Bay Company would surrender to the Dominion Government certain territory and that such territory would be thrown open to settlement. These prospects, in connection with the effort to settle western Minnesota and eastern Dakota, led to the establishment of a stage line between St. Paul and Abercrombie by the Minnesota Stage Company, the proprietors of which were Messrs. J. C. and H. C. Burbank and Captain Russell Blakeley. The Hudson Bay Company, anxious to get some of its goods for Manitoba and its southern posts via the United States, offered J. C. Burbank and Company 500 tons of freight per year to be transported from St. Paul to Fort Garry for five years, and this may have been a reason for this company purchasing the Anson Northrup. Any how, soon after his return to St. Paul, Mr. Northrup disposed of the boat and, if we can credit this from the Pioneer and Democrat of July 13, at a fairly good price. "J. C. Burbank and Company purchased the Anson Northrup for \$8000.00, now laid up at Fort Abercrombie after one trip to Fort Garry. Her future operation is assured."

Captain Edwin Bell was employed by the Burbanks to take charge of the Anson Northrup and in the meantime Georgetown, at the mouth of the Buffalo river, in Minnesota, was selected as the head of navigation as the river between that point and Breckenridge was very shoal and uncertain. In due time Captain Bell, with A. R. and J. B. Young, pilot and engineer, got some freight on the boat and set out for Fort Garry.

The river had fallen since the first trip and on

arrival at Goose Rapids Captain Bell found real work ahead of him. The water was swift and huge boulders showed in many places with a high gravel bar at the foot of the rapids. He put his freight ashore from which it was taken by teams and proceeded to negotiate the rapids. The boulders he disposed of by digging deep holes below and rolling them into the holes. The gravel bar he conquered by building a brush dam.

All this took time and when the boat arrived at Fort Garry the season was so far advanced, or the water was so low, that it was deemed unwise to try to get the boat back up the river so she was taken to Indian river, below Fort Garry, and laid up. The crew returned to St. Paul via the regular train of ox carts. And thus ended the first season for the Anson Northrup.

CHAPTER III.

During the winter of 1859-60, J. C. and H. C. Burbank acquired Captain Blakeley's interest in the boat, he retaining his interest in the stage line, and after a complete inspection they found they had a lemon as well as a steamboat. While the hull was new, it had been hastily constructed of green pine; the machinery was old; the boiler was of locomotive type, had a cracked head, and was in bad condition generally. However, she was repaired as well as possible and then christened the Pioneer and came out in the spring in charge of Captain Sam T. Painter, from the Mississippi, with Alden Bryant, clerk.

The following from the Pioneer and Democrat of July 8, 1860 is the only mention we can find for the year:

"Mr. C. V. P. Lull returned yesterday from Red River. The Anson Northrup had made her third trip, making the passage from Fort Garry to Georgetown

in a little over two days. She expected to make the down trip in about twenty four hours, running time."

"The country all the way looked finely."

THE FLOOD OF 1861.

Probably the greatest flood ever known on Red River was in the spring of 1861. Running north, with the spring "break up" commencing at the upper end, it can be easily seen that the accumulated mass of broken ice would form immense dams at various places which would flood the entire country, as once the water was out of the river banks it promptly over-run the broad prairies.

One "G. W. N." in the St. Cloud Democrat of June 13, 1861, gives the following description:

GEORGETOWN, MINN., June 4, 1861. Editor of Democrat:—Red River intelligence has found place in the columns of Minnesota papers of late. It is remarkable that, visited as we have been with one of the most destructive floods that has occurred in this valley for years, that the fact should not have been chronicled in the newspapers long ere this! To say that we have had a high freshet expresses but weakly the extent of the inundation. From the mouth of the Sheyenne to Lake Winnipeg—the valley at one time resembled an immense sea, to which, looking from any point on Red River no boundary could be defined, excepting, perhaps to the eastward, in which direction the heights of the Mississippi could be faintly discerned. The long black lines of timber, marking the course of the river, and its tributaries, stretching out into the plains, were the only land marks.

This vast body of water remained above the level of the prairies nearly two weeks, subsiding slowly until

confined to its proper channel, when it fell more rapidly. During the continuation of the flood the steamboat Anson Northrup rode quietly at anchor to the lee of the heavy timber joining Red River. The boat has now been fully repaired and was launched yesterday. Expecting high water, ways were constructed previously, the boat brought into place, and when the water receded it was in a position to re-bottom, caulk, pitch etc., all of which has been done, and she struck the water yesterday a new boat almost. The boat will start for Fort Garry this week; quite a number of passengers are laying over here to take passage.

The settlers of Fort Garry, or near the mouth of the Assiniboine, have suffered severely by this flood. I was told at Pembina Mountain (from whence I recently returned) by a half breed who had just arrived from the Fort, that most of the horned cattle had perished; having been driven to ridges as the water gained the level of the prairie, which were either entirely covered or else surrounded by deep water and no herbiage to subsist them any length of time. I shall learn the particulars of the effect of the flood soon and will try to forward them to you. Pembina Mountain, or St. Joseph, has received the bulk of the population, who have all fled at approach of this flood. Farming in the Red River valley below the Red Lake river is utterly impossible this season and the mountain people are putting in an unusually large crop—this they will certainly need.

The brigades of Plain Hunters will be increased by the addition of most of the farmers at the settlement as buffalo hunting will be more profitable than cultivating Red River mud.

Forty five lodges of Assiniboines are encamped at the village of St. Joseph. They are on a friendly visit

assisting their Ojibwa and half-breed neighbors to finish up their last year's pemmican. This they have nearly accomplished and the price of pemmican has risen as a consequence. I would add, however, to relieve the anxiety of those who intend visiting that region this summer, that fish are going down.

I hope it is understood that fish are a never failing resource to satisfy the cravings of hunger in that region. However, the "bon temps viendra" are several half-breeds who have been in the employ of the fur companies on the Missouri river, have lately returned and report immense herds of buffalo on the Cotenu du Missouri moving eastward. They crossed the Missouri on the ice in immense numbers. There remains no doubt but that the eastern plains of Dakota will be covered with buffalo this season. A hunting brigade has just arrived at the mountain. They were very successful, having filled their carts in the vicinity of Devils Lake."

The boat that "rode quietly at anchor" was the Pioneer, as the Anson Northrup passed out of existence at the close of 1859.

After the water had fallen sufficiently navigation was resumed and doubtless there was a very good season. It will be remembered that the Burbanks were under contract with the Hudson Bay Company to carry a certain amount of its freight. That the season was reasonably satisfactory is shown by an item in the St. Cloud Democrat of December 5th, 1861, which stated that Mr. E. R. Abell, engineer of the Pioneer, had returned home and reported that the boat had been laid up about 30 miles below Fort Garry on November 1st, and that there had been a good stage of water during the entire season.

This is the last mention of the Pioneer we can find and we conclude that this was her finish. There is a report that later her machinery and shaft were brought back to Grand Forks.

THE SECOND BOAT.

In June, 1859, Captain John B. Davis started up the Minnesota river with the Freighter, a square bowed boat with good power, with the avowed intention of taking her through Big Stone lake, Lake Traverse and the Bois de Sioux river into Red River. The water had been high but he started a little too late and the enterprise was a failure. The boat grounded and was abandoned a few miles before she reached Big Stone lake.

Big Stone lake is an enlargement of the Minnesota river, which enters the lake on its northern end. There is no connection between the Minnesota river and Lake Traverse except in time of freshet or flood in the spring and then the country looks like one big lake—water everywhere. There is no place in the world that can be compared to this short distance—probably a mile or so—between these two waterways. It is the only obstruction for a through water route from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson Bay, the elimination of which would enable the Atlantic ocean to connect with itself in an endless “merry-go-round.”

Later the machinery and boiler of the Freighter were purchased by the Burbanks and they hauled them to Georgetown where they constructed a boat very aptly called the International. The timber in her hull was from the bottom lands of Buffalo and Red rivers and she was constructed under the supervision of a Mr. McConnell, of Beaver, Pa. That her construction was well along at the close of the season of 1861 is evidenced by a statement made by Mr. Abell to the St. Cloud Demo-

crat and published in its issue of Dec. 5, 1861: "The machinery of the Freighter has been brought to Red River and will be used in a new boat being built, which is of excellent model."

It is regrettable that we can find no account of the construction and launching of this famous boat—International. The first reference we have that can possibly refer to her in a quotation from a private letter dated at Breckenridge May 24th, 1862 and printed in the St. Cloud Democrat of May 29th: "I learn that the steamboat left last Tuesday and that she had bad luck from the start. She ran into the brush and trees, tearing off her smoke stacks, which delayed her four hours."

The inference from this quotation would be that the boat left Breckenridge at the time mentioned but as Georgetown is prominently mentioned in the letter on another subject, and as there was no apparent reason for the boat going to Breckenridge we conclude that she started on her initial trip from Georgetown and, dating back, find the time to have been Tuesday, May 20, 1862. That she came out in 1862 is further shown by the United States Inspector's certificate, which so states.

Mr. C. V. P. Lull had charge of the boat for a few trips and then Mr. Norman W. Kittson was engaged to manage her. The Indians had become troublesome and had demanded "hush money", claiming that the boat drove away all the game, killed the fish and made such an everlasting noise that the spirits of their fathers were disturbed. As Mr. Kittson was well known to the Indians and spoke their language it was expected that he would be able to pour oil on the waters. In this he was successful for a time, but when the uprising in southern Minnesota came it spread to Red River; the

tribes became restless and did much damage and steam-boating was anything but a pleasure. On one occasion the International got aground on her trip to Fort Garry and was abandoned, her freight and passengers being taken to destination by teams. As a whole the season was a very unsatisfactory and unprofitable one.

CHAPTER IV.

Right here we will change the subject for a moment and quote from the St. Cloud Democrat of November 6, 1862 in noting the arrival at St. Cloud of a train of supplies en route to Fort Abercrombie:

“The train bearing supplies for Fort Abercrombie arrived last evening, escorted by two companies of cavalry under command of Lieut. Colonel Peteler. The train, which consists of sixty-three six-mule teams, is under charge of Captain Smith. They remain here until tomorrow morning and our Company of cavalry will accompany them to the Fort.

“A train of 100 teams belonging to Burbank and Company also goes with them. The whole cavalcade will be six miles long.”

This is of interest, as showing how the frontier was taken care of at that time.

On March 31, 1863, Capt. Sam Painter, Engineer Abell, and other members of the crew, left St. Cloud for Red River to take charge of the International, then the only boat in commission on the river.

St. Cloud in those days was quite an important point, especially during the season of navigation. Commencing in 1850 there had been boats running from St. Anthony, above the falls, a distance of 78 miles by river, and this had resulted in much of the teaming

that had come through St. Paul stopping at St. Cloud and being taken to St. Anthony by boat and then hauled to St. Paul.

Mr. Abell was some writer as well as engineer and we are much pleased to reproduce a letter from him that appeared in the St. Cloud Democrat in the issue of May 7, 1863:

Fort Abercrombie, D. T., April 25, 1863:—Editor Democrat: The news from this section of the country is somewhat unimportant. I have no graphic account of the reduction of Charleston or Vicksburg to give you, nor yet any remarkable exploits against the brutal red skins; but I will briefly state that Georgetown—Fort Sanborn,—is evacuated and the International is moored under cover of the guns of Fort Abercrombie.

We (the boat crew) did not continue on our way direct to Georgetown, as was the intention when we left St. Cloud, as we deemed it unsafe for so few men to stay there without some protection. On arrival at Abercrombie we remained until orders arrived granting us a company of soldiers to escort us to Georgetown and return with the boat. Capt. Barrett's company was detailed for the occasion and made an attempt to start on the 14th but, unfortunately, as a four mule team was crossing the river, the wagon, loaded with provisions, ran off the ferry boat into the river and dragged the mules after it, and one of the mules was drowned. Lieut. Becker lost all his baggage and the provisions were nearly a total loss.

This incident put an end to the excursion for that day but the following morning found us on our way bright and early. The heavy wind and clouds of dust from the prairie made our journey very disagreeable.

We arrived at Georgetown on Thursday 16th. About twenty miles south of Georgetown we met three Red Lake Indians, two of whom I knew. They were hunting on the river on their way to Grand Forks and asked us not to shoot them in mistake for Sioux. They said the Pemmicans had made a treaty with the Sioux but they did not and did not intend to, and if they had an opportunity would like to take a few Sioux scalps. But the Devil trust them! I judge a white man's scalp would answer as well as a Sioux's, if a favorable chance presented itself.

We were until Monday fortifying the pilot house and hastily putting the machinery together. We then steamed up and about noon began to wend our way up the circuitous, winding, crooked channel of the Red River of the North. In fact crooked is not a name for it. There ought to be a new word coined in the English language to give anything like a correct idea of the shape of the river. We arrived at this place last evening making the trip from Georgetown in four and one-half days. We did not find so many obstructions in the river as anticipated; a few snags and some overhanging trees only had to be removed. The water was at a good stage and the channel good except in two or three places about twenty miles by land south of Georgetown (what the distance by water is I cannot tell, but something less than five hundred miles) and here the boat rubbed the bottom a little but not enough to retard her progress.

The International is well proportioned for the river below Georgetown but it is altogether too large for above that point; in fact I think no boat could be built to navigate such a crooked stream, although we got here without damage except a few scratches on the railing. Our captain, Sam T. Painter, is an experienced

steamboatman, cautious, careful and prudent and much depended on his judgment in getting the boat safely up a stream so difficult to navigate.

The soldiers accompanying us went ashore in small parties, hunting or skirmishing, I believe they call it, through the belt of timber that lines the bank of the river and nearly every party would bring some kind of game on board. One killed a fine otter; another a mink; another a large elk; others geese, ducks, prairie chickens and musk rats. The soldiers had no difficulty in keeping pace with us. At certain places we would steam for miles and then find ourselves only a few rods from where we started, so that those on shore could make from one point to another in a few minutes while it would take hours for the boat to get around. The boys seemed to enjoy themselves on this trip and I should think would be glad to go on another such expedition as a change to life in a fort.

The time for the boat to leave this place for Fort Garry is unknown to me at present. It depends in a measure on the growth of the grass. I suppose as soon as cattle can feed on grass a train of freight will come through and when we leave I hope we will have soldiers along with us at least as far as Pembina. If we do not our trip is liable to be dangerous one.

Yours respectfully,

E. R. Abell.

The Indian troubles of 1863 on Red River were chiefly between the different tribes but none of the tribes seemed to object to a white man getting in the way. Add to this the troubles of extreme low water and the last of June found the International "safely moored under the guns of Fort Abercrombie" and we find no further record for 1863.

In 1864 the International left Fort Abercrombie on April 19th, and the article descriptive of her departure says:—"The steamboat left yesterday morning for Pembina and intermediate points. This morning her smoke was visible with the naked eye, at a distance of about three miles. When last seen she was moving down stern foremost, there not being water enough to allow her to turn. She will probably be able to perform that evolution at the mouth of Rice river."

One report says that she made but one trip during the season and spent most of the time at Fort Abercrombie. Any how, she was laid up the latter part of July.

The Indian troubles were then well cleaned up but affairs in Canada had not improved. The country had not been opened to settlement and was still controlled by the Hudson Bay Company whose policies were directly opposite those of the Burbanks. The latter wanted business and immigration; the Company wanted furs and cared only for Indians to furnish them. The result was that the Burbanks took the easiest way out of trouble and disposed of the International to Mr. Kittson for the Hudson Bay Company.

With the discontinuance of possible competition the carts trade increased and the International was operated for the convenience of the owners for the next five or six years and no effort made to take care of or secure business other than that of the Hudson Bay Company.

Meantime pressure continued for the opening of Manitoba to settlement and in the spring of 1869 an ultimatum was given the Hudson Bay Company by the Dominion Government which resulted in the country being opened to settlement during the summer of 1870.

CHAPTER V.

INCREASING NAVIGATION.

In the winter of 1870-71 Mr. James J. Hill, Alex Griggs and others under the name of Hill, Griggs and Company, constructed the Selkirk at McCauleyville, Minnesota, just across the river from Fort Abercrombie. The lumber for her hull was milled at Frazee, Minn., and floated down the Otter Tail and Red Rivers. Her machinery was hauled by team from Benson then the end of the St. Paul and Pacific railway. Jesse B. Young installed the machinery and was her first engineer. Alex Griggs, master; Harry Y. Smith, clerk; M. L. McCormack and Jerry Webber, pilots. The boat left on her first trip April 12, 1871 with 115 passengers and 125 tons of freight. The passengers went by stage from Benson and the freight was hauled from St. Cloud and Benson. She ran to Fort Garry during the entire season, the upper terminal being Georgetown or Frog Point, at the foot of Goose Rapids, depending on the stage of water.

Previous to this time the shipment of goods in bond through the United States had been somewhat a matter of form and bonded goods had gone forward by carts, teams and almost any way to get them through, with little attempt, apparently, to prevent diversion en route. This year, 1871, the revenue department of the United States Treasury issued an order that no more goods for Manitoba and the Canadian northwest should pass through the United States in bond unless handled by a bonded line. Hill, Griggs and Company had arranged for such a line from St. Paul to Fort Garry in connection with the Selkirk and had advised English and Canadian shippers that all goods sent in care of Hill, Griggs and Company at St. Paul would go forward

without delay and the Hudson Bay people awoke to the fact that no foreign goods could pass over the boundary line unless carried by the steamer Selkirk. Mr. Kittson at once got busy and in June, 1871, the International was made a part of a bonded line and put into the general trade and then began real steamboating on Red River of the North.

During the winter of 1871-72 Mr. Kittson, for the Hudson Bay Company, built the steamer Dakota at Breckenridge, which then made three boats in service. The Northern Pacific had been completed to Moorhead and the St. Paul and Pacific to Breckenridge and business to Manitoba was increasing rapidly. A little competition the year before had convinced the owners of both boats that co-operation was advisable so the three boats were placed under the management of Mr. Kittson the name being "Kittson's Red River Transportation Line."

In 1873 a tug boat called the Maggie was built at Hamilton, Ontario, navigated to Duluth, placed on Northern Pacific cars, transported to Moorhead and launched into Red River and taken to Winnipeg. This was the first propeller on Red River.

During the winter of 1873-74 Captain McLain of Winnipeg built a boat at Breckenridge called the Alpha, intending her for the trade across the border. Owing to legal complications this could not be done, so the boat was sold to Mr. Kittson and placed under American registry. During this same winter the Red River Transportation Company was formed, consisting practically of the same interests that owned the boats to that time, and the new company took over all the boats, including a little side-wheeler built that winter, called the Cheyenne, in all five boats in addition to some 20 barges.

Freight and passenger business was booming and there was a large immigration of Canadians and Mennonites into the Northwest provinces.

Some dissatisfaction resulted from the operations of the "monopoly," as the consolidated line was called, so some St. Paul, Moorhead and Winnipeg interests combined in the organization of the Merchants International Steamboat Company, which company put on two boats, Minnesota and Manitoba, in the spring of 1875.

The prime movers and stockholders of this line were James Douglas, a prominent merchant of Moorhead, and J. H. Ashdown, J. H. Lyons and A. G. B. Bannatyne, leading merchants of Winnipeg.

The boats were framed on the Ohio river and sent by rail to Moorhead, where they were put together. That the line might be bonded it was under American management and registry.

The Manitoba arrived at Winnipeg on May 21, 1875, with 102 cabin passengers, 181 deck passengers and 365 tons of freight. She was royally received; much speechmaking, and a magnificent stand of colors given her.

The Minnesota arrived a couple of days later and had much the same reception but the Manitoba seemed always to be the favorite, caused, perhaps, by the name.

The new line proved to be an organization whose managers were not versed in the ways of steamboating. The business of the owners was not sufficient to pay its expenses and before it could divert business from the old established line it was treading a rocky road. Early in the game the Manitoba and International were in collision which resulted in the sinking of the Manitoba.



STEAMER SELKIRK

The formation of the Merchants International Line developed competition and competition caused ill feeling and in some quarters the statement was made, and believed, that the Manitoba was deliberately sunk by the "Monopolists". No official investigation was made, so far as we know, and the only statement appearing in print that we have seen was that of Captain John S. Segers of the International.

Captain Segers says that he was on watch at the time of the accident about 11:30 a. m. When just below Le Mays' mill, where there is a very sharp point, he saw a steamer approaching which he took for one of the Winnipeg tugs as he did not expect to meet the Manitoba at this place. He blew the whistle for the port side, he being the descending boat and entitled to choice of side in passing and the Manitoba answered for the starboard side. The steamers were then within about 150 feet of each other and Capt. Segers reversed his engines and blew again for the port side it being impossible for him to go to the starboard as wind and current were both against him. The Manitoba was then right across the bow of the International, the latter still backing, and it was impossible to avoid a collision. The International struck the Manitoba just abreast of the stairs cutting into her ten or fifteen feet. Everything was confusion at once and the impression was that both boats were sinking. This, however, was but momentary and discipline quickly prevailed. The deck of the Manitoba was under water before the International could back clear of her. The International was then laid alongside of the Manitoba but almost immediately withdrawn to avoid loss of life from an imminent boiler explosion. Soon, however she was laid across the bow of the Manitoba, with her nose to the bank, and thus held until all the passengers and baggage were transferred.

In due time the Manitoba was repaired and again in service. This is how she was received by her friends at Winnipeg.

The Steamer Manitoba.

“Resuscitation and Welcome!

“The Manitoba arrived here on Sunday last and a large crowd gathered at the levee to welcome her to our port. This steamer it will be remembered, was sunk on June 4, 1875, since which time the Company, the Merchants International has been engaged in raising her and repairing damages. The effort of raising has been a long and costly one, but the improved appearance of the boat in a manner makes up for the great loss sustained.”

CHAPTER VI.

“The sky-light has been renewed by a handsome one, a crowning roof sets off the upper part of the deck. The inner cabin has been greatly improved, painted and decorated and at the rear end of the ladies cabin is the name Manitoba the letters being in gold and shaded. Immediately underneath is painted a badger, in a green leaf as a background, and on either side are the ensigns of England and America supported by the Lion and the Eagle.

“Everything within has a fresh pleasant appearance and the exterior of the boat has received many additions, among which is gingerbread work about the upper rail of the boiler deck and gilded knobs and a sign immediately over the fore part of the hurricane deck.

“The same old officers and crew are in charge and in fairness to all and injustice to none we confess that the Manitoba is the handsomest steamer on Red River. The sinking of the boat was attended with many narrow

escapes and as the officers and many of the crew are well known to our people it is not surprising that a demonstration of gladness upon a safe return, after great hardships, was vouchsafed to them."

From all of which we are almost ready to conclude that it pays to get sunk!

In addition to this disaster the company was losing money in the operation of the boats, so after dodging the libeling officers for a time the owners threw up the sponge and the boats became the property of the Red River Transportation Company.

Although a number of boats were built in the United States later, chiefly for local trade and for private use in towing grain to elevators built at the railroad points on the river, the seven boats heretofore mentioned were the ones best known in the trade to Winnipeg. For several years there was a large business and in many instances the Customs receipts at Winnipeg were over \$50,000.00 per month.

At this time, 1875, the freight rates from St. Paul to Winnipeg were, per hundred pounds: 1st class, \$2.00; 2nd class, \$1.50; 3rd class, \$1.25; 4th class \$1.00. Now, 1927, the rates are: 1st class, \$1.28; 2nd class, \$1.07; 3rd class, 84c; 4th class, 63c. The passenger rates were then: 1st class, which included meals and berth while on steamer, \$24.00; 2nd class, deck passage on steamer, \$15.00. The rail rate now is \$16.03 in addition to which one must "eat and sleep" one's self.

Navigation closed very unexpectedly in 1875 and the International was the only boat that succeeded in making her contemplated winter quarters. The others were caught at different points along the river but fortunately there was no loss, either at the close of navigation nor during the break up in the following spring.

In the early days before railroads reached Red River freight was hauled to various points on the river by team. Georgetown was the most popular place on account of it being a Hudson Bay Company post. Then came the railroad terminals at Moorhead and Breckenridge. In the summer of 1872 the St. Paul and Pacific built an extension from Glydon to Crookston and that place became the main re-shipping point late that season.

A couple of years later an extension of the line was built to Fisher's Landing, on Red Lake river, towards Grand Forks, and this was the terminal until the completion of the St. Paul and Pacific to St. Vincent in 1877. In the spring of 1878 the Minnesota, Manitoba, Alpha and Cheyenne were placed in the trade between St. Vincent and Winnipeg.

This spring saw the earliest arrival of a steamer at Winnipeg, the Manitoba from Fisher's Landing, March 24, 1878.

The other boats of the line were used on the upper portion of the river, intermittently, as there was a certain amount of business still reaching the river at Moorhead via the Northern Pacific. This business gave an opening for the steamer J. L. Grandin built in 1878 mainly to haul the wheat from the famous farm of that name, to enter the Winnipeg trade during her "off season" and she made a few successful trips during the years 1878 and 1879 under the management of Oliver Dalrymple. It was pretty hard however, to "buck" the old established line and her "through trade" career was short.

During the winter of 1878 and 1879 the Canadian Pacific completed its line between Winnipeg and St.

Vincent and the death knell of through steamboating on Red River was rung.

The four boats were sold to a Winnipeg corporation, the Winnipeg and Western Transportation Company, and became British bottoms. The Minnesota, her name changed to City of Winnipeg, was loaded with lumber for the Saskatchewan and sank while crossing Lake Winnipeg. The Manitoba was sent to the Saskatchewan where she was in service until the Canadian Pacific again killed her off. The Alpha and Cheyenne ran for some time on the Red and Assinaboine rivers and were dismantled in Winnipeg in 1883. The Dakota was burned in mid-stream near Pembina in 1881. The International was dismantled at Grand Forks in 1880. The Selkirk was carried from her moorings at Grand Forks in the spring of 1884, struck a railroad bridge pier and was completely wrecked. Captain Griggs took the pilot house to his home and his children used it as a play house.

CHAPTER VII.

ROSTER OF STEAMERS.

The following are believed to be all the steamboats built for commercial purposes on Red River in the United States. Descriptions given are as complete as we have been able to obtain:

ANSON NORTHRUP:—Built at La Fayette spring of 1859. No official record of dimensions or machinery. Hull probably about 90 ft. long and 22 ft. beam.

PIONEER:—Rebuilt from the Anson Northrup in 1860.

INTERNATIONAL:—Built at Georgetown in 1861. Hull 136 ft. long, 26 ft. beam, 4 ft. deep. Engine 12 in. by 5½ ft. Boilers 38 in. by 23 ft. 172.17 tons.

SELKIRK:—Built at McCauleyville, winter 1870-71. Hull: 110 ft. long, 24 ft. beam, 3 ft. deep. Engines: 12 in. by 3½ ft. Boilers: 42 in. by 14 ft. 119.08 tons.

DAKOTA:—Built at Breckenridge, winter of 1871-72. Hull: 92 ft. long, 22 ft. beam, 3½ ft. deep. Engines: 12 in. by 4 ft. Boilers: 40 in. by 16 ft. 117.75 tons.

ALPHA:—Built at Breckenridge, winter of 1873-74. No record as to size of boat or machinery.

CHEYENNE:—Built at Grand Forks, winter of 1873-74. Hull: dimensions unknown. Engines: 3½ in. by 3½ ft. Boiler: 42 in. by 19½ ft. 90.98 tons.

MANITOBA:—Built at Fargo 1875. Hull: 135 ft. long, 31.4 ft. beam, 4.9 ft. deep. Engines: 12 in. by 4 ft. Boilers: 42 in. by 20 ft. 197.74 tons.

MINNESOTA:—(Same as Manitoba. These boats were framed on the Ohio river, shipped knocked down, and set up at Fargo.)

J. L. GRANDIN:—Built at Fargo in 1878. Hull: 125 ft. long, 32 ft. beam, 4 ft. deep. Engines: 12 in. by 4 ft. Boilers: 42 in. by 24 ft. 217.77 tons.

PLUCK:—Rebuilt at Moorhead in 1880. Hull: 95 ft. long, 16 ft. beam, 3½ ft. deep. Engines: 8½ in. by 5 ft. Boiler: 34 in. by 19 ft. 35.94 tons. (Originally built at Brainerd. Transported to Moorhead by railroad.)

H. W. ALSOP:—Built at Moorhead winter of 1881-82. Hull: 125 ft. long, no other dimensions. Engines: 12 in. by 6 ft. Boiler: 42 in. by 20 ft. 157.45 tons.

FRAM:—Rebuilt at East Grand Forks in 1890. Hull: 71.7 ft. long, 18.8 ft. beam, 3.2 ft. deep. Engines: 8 in. by 3 ft. Boiler: 42 in. by 16 ft. 22 tons. (Brought from Red Lake river above Crookston where she was in operation for several years.)

GRAND FORKS:—Built at Grand Forks in 1895. Hull: 123 ft. long, 26.5 ft. beam, 4 ft. deep. Had machinery and boiler of the H. W. Alsop. 99.46 tons. This was the last steamboat built on Red River in the United States for commercial purposes.

These boats were all stern wheelers except the Pluck and Cheyenne. The Cheyenne was originally a "geared boat" but later was made into an independent side wheeler.

In addition the Government built, about 1882, a tender called the General Poe. Her machinery was later taken to the waters of the upper Mississippi. The Government also built a dipper dredge, the Otter Tail, 75 ft. long, 24 ft. beam and 6 ft. deep. In 1887 another tender was built, 112.6 ft. long; 23.3 ft. beam and 4.1 ft. deep.

There were built at Moorhead in the '80's the Wm. Robinson, a small propeller, and the Marquette and Northwest, pretty fair seized stern wheelers, for Winnipeg parties for service around that city and on the Assiniboine.

It will be noted that several boats were constructed after the railroad was completed to Winnipeg. They were for local business within the United States as the country adjacent to the river had become well settled and the "bread basket of the world" was functioning. That they were needed is shown by the fact that about 1877 small elevators and warehouses for the reception and shipment of grain began to be erected on the river bank and soon there were houses of this description at: Belmont, formerly Frog Point, Dak; Anderson, Minn.; Ferry House—so called on account of a ferry across the river being established at that point, Minn.; Walle, Dak.; all above Grand Forks. Below Grand Forks:

Dallins, Granville, Big Woods, Canning, Minn; Drayton, Dak. The most of these houses were operated by the Minneapolis and Northern Elevator Company for many years. One of the largest of these houses was at Drayton. It was built about 1883 by Crandall and Anderson and had a capacity of about 30,000 bushels. Grain was run to the oats and barges by tram cars. It was dismantled in 1915. Doubtless few of these places now exist even in memory of the people living adjacent.

In addition there were elevators equipped to take grain in bulk from barges and ship same by cars: two at Fargo; one at Moorhead; two at East Grand Forks; one in Dakota opposite Oslo, Minn.

Mr. H. E. Magill, Fargo, is authority that one of the Fargo elevators was on the present (1928) site of George Bahe's feed mill and was built by Barnes and Magill about 1876. It was taken over by the Northern Pacific Elevator Company in 1882. The other one was on ground now occupied by the Fargo Foundry Co., and was built in May, 1878, by the Grandin Brothers for grain from their farm. On completion of the railroad to that farm it was used by Alsop Brothers. The Moorhead elevator was on a part of the present tourist camp and, according to the best evidence we can get, was originally built by Bruns and Finkle previous to 1878. Later it was known as the "Alsop mill and elevator."

One of the East Grand Forks elevators was built by the Red River Transportation Company in 1880-81 and acquired by the Great Northern Railway about 1890. It was dismantled about 1907. The other was built by the Northern Pacific Railway soon after its arrival there in 1887.

In 1905 the Soo Line built its road from Thief River Falls, Minn., west and about 1907 the McGuire interests constructed an elevator opposite Oslo, Minn., using such of the machinery and other material as could be used to advantage from the elevator on the Great Northern tracks at East Grand Forks, and the Soo Line at once got its share of Red River Valley wheat. After river traffic was abandoned the house was taken over by Spaulding and Company and was in operation until destroyed by fire in 1922.

Kittson's Red River Transportation Line, which in 1872 consisted of the steamers International and Dakota, owned by the Hudson Bay Company and the Selkirk, owned by Hill, Griggs and Company, was a sort of "gentleman's agreement" and worked well for a couple of years. In 1874 the Red River Transportation Company was incorporated in Minnesota by N. W. Kittson, H. H. Sibley, James J. Hill, Christian Michael, of St. Paul and Alexander Griggs, of Grand Forks, Dakota. The capital stock was originally \$100,000.00 and this was increased to \$150,000.00 in 1876. In 1890 the company was owned by the Great Northern Railway, with James J. Hill as president, and Captain Bruce Griggs, Manager.

Merchants International Steamboat Line was originated in 1875, under the laws of Minnesota, with a capital stock of \$50,000.00. The incorporators were: R. J. Baldwin, Minneapolis, Minn., Thomas Simpson, H. E. Curtis, Abner Lewis, John Douglas, Winona, Minn., Arthur Thornton, Franconia, Minn., James Douglas, Moorhead, Minn. We now wonder why these particular persons were the incorporators but doubtless there was a reason. American organization and registration was necessary, although it was generally known

that the major part of the money for the enterprise was furnished by Winnipeg merchants.

The J. L. Grandin was constructed for the purpose of hauling wheat from the famous farm of that name in Traill county. She was, we believe, the first Dakota built and owned steamer on Red River. She was launched at Fargo, March 20, 1878; made her trial trip on April 27th, and went at once into service, accompanied by six barges, in command of Capt. Chas. B. Thimens. It was stated that by May 11th she had brought to Moorhead 35,000 bushels of wheat from the Grandin farm. That she was of good power and speed is evidenced by the fact that on one of her through trips in 1878 she left Winnipeg on a Monday evening at 9:00 o'clock and arrived at Grand Forks on Wednesday at 7:15 A. M. On completion of the railroad to the farm in 1880 she was hauled out on the bank and dismantled.

About 1877 Mr. R. C. Munger, of Duluth, was buying wheat along Red River and had some trouble in getting it to the railroad. During 1878 Messrs. C. R. Alsop and C. E. Mahlun built a side wheeler called the White Swan, at Brainard, Minn., to be used on the Mississippi between Sauk Rapids and Pokegama Falls, in whatever trade was most desirable. The water was so low that after a couple of trips she was laid up and her owners gladly welcomed the suggestion of Mr. Munger to take her to Red River and handle his wheat. So she was cut in two lengthwise and transported to Fargo by cars in October, 1878.

There she was rebuilt and called the Pluck. Mr. H. W. Alsop purchased the interest of Mr. Mahlun, two barges were built for her and she became the Alsop Line, owned by Alsop brothers. During the winter of 1881-82 they built a stern wheeler called the Henry W.

Alsop and added six barges. Their operation was chiefly between Moorhead and Grand Forks in connection with the Northern Pacific Railroad, at Moorhead, although there was some business done above Moorhead. The latter was chiefly wood traffic. They did a fair business during the grain shipping season, but there was low water every year and in 1883 the entire outfit was sold to the Red River Transportation Company.

The Pluck was dismantled about 1886 and the machinery of the Alsop went into the Grand Forks in 1895.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Fram, brought from above Crookston on Red Lake river in 1890, was taken over and rebuilt by the East Grand Forks Transportation Company, incorporated in 1900 by Anton O. Lystad, G. F. Peterson, James Elkington, E. Arneson and H. D. Anderson. The original capital stock of \$25,000.00 was increased to \$35,000.00 in 1903 at which time this Company purchased from the Red River Transportation Company the steamer Grand Forks and about a dozen barges and thus gained control of the local business. In 1901 through rates were established to eastern terminals of the Northern Pacific Railway in connection with the East Grand Forks Transportation Company. The proportion accruing to the boat line was from three to four and one half cents per hundred pounds, depending on the point of origin.

About 1906 McGuire and Atwood financed the East Grand Forks Transportation Company to the extent of furnishing money for the purchase of grain to be shipped to that firm at Duluth. The firm was soon succeeded by the Atwood-Stone Company and in a very short time that Company was obliged to take over the entire assets of the East Grand Forks Transportation

Company to protect itself. This meant the operation of the steamboats for which the Atwood-Stone people had no desire, so the Red River Transportation Company of North Dakota was incorporated by John Birkholz, Alvin Robertson, C. S. Wallace, Minneapolis; S. S. Titus, C. C. Gowran, E. J. Lander, Grand Forks; D. C. Moore, Grafton and the new corporation took over all the property of the East Grand Forks Transportation Company. The new company participated in the joint rates already established with the Northern Pacific Railway and established similar rates with the Soo Line, the connection being at Oslo.

Great things were expected from this latter connection. Not only was grain to be handled, on which the boat line was to get five cents per hundred pounds, but merchandise as well and it was anticipated that a large amount of the latter could be procured from Grand Forks. The new organization was first managed by Wm. Sorenson, with O. Peniston, who had been with the Alsop people and the precious Red River Transportation Company, in charge of the boats. This was of short duration and Colonel W. H. McGraw was given charge of the entire enterprise, which then included many of the houses along the river as well as the transportation facilities.

The new management for sentimental or some other good reason decided to make at least one good stagger at renewal of navigation to Winnipeg.

So on Sunday, June 6th, 1909 at 6 A. M., the steamer Grand Forks left the city of that name in charge of Captain Sylvester Perro with a goodly number of prominent citizens and business men of Grand Forks, as well as some old time steamboatmen. She laid up that night at Pembina and arrived at Winnipeg at 6:00

P. M., on Monday 7th. She was met at the landing by all the inhabitants able to leave their homes and places of business and "old times" prevailed that night and the next day until 4:00 P. M. when she started on her return trip. She reached Grand Forks at noon on Thursday 10th, and was the last boat to cross the international boundary to this date.

Col. W. H. McGraw, of Grand Forks, was manager of the excursion. The boat was officered by Sylvester Perro, master; O. Peniston, who for several years was manager for the Red River Transportation Company, clerk; J. W. Slatter, pilot; J. W. Perry and Oscar Lystad, engineers.

Captain Perro is a son of the famous "Big Jo. Perro," pilot of floating raft days who lived in Stillwater about where the new State prison is located, and is said to have been the first white child born in Washington county. The Captain went to Red River in 1876 and remained in active service until he saw the steamboat business come to an end in 1911. For a number of years he made his home in Grand Forks but is now living near the old homestead of his father and he is one of the very few Red River navigators alive.

It had been 28 years since a boat had crossed the International boundary but in the mean time there had been considerable local navigation, the business consisting chiefly of moving wheat from various points to railroad elevators, but the end of navigation was even then in sight.

While the trip was a success and secured a good deal of advertising it did not increase the volume of business nor reduce the overhead expenses. The anticipated amount of business from the Soo Line did not materialize, the water got low and the Transportation Company

faced a serious situation. It struggled along, however, during the seasons of 1909 and 1910.

In the spring of 1911 the Grand Forks sank at the bank—one authority says from neglect—and was a total wreck, her machinery being sold later. During that summer the Fram and the barges were sold to Whitney Brothers, of Duluth, who, under the name of Whitney Transportation Company, endeavored to put new life into the organization but without success. In the spring of 1912 the Fram and several barges broke loose at Grand Forks and went down the river and the jig was up. The machinery was taken out of the Fram and shipped to Duluth, and the end of steamboating on the Red River of the North was at hand.

Through rates, however, were not cancelled until September, 1913 by the Soo Line and in 1914 by the Northern Pacific.

We quote from the report of the U. S. Engineer in charge of the river for the year 1915:

"1911 and 1912 were dry years and practically wiped out the two steamers Fram and Grand Forks, and eleven barges engaged in wheat transportation. The boats were sunk and the barges disposed of; elevators wrecked and tracks removed and today there is no commercial navigation so far as we can learn."

Thus ended steamboat navigation on the Red River of the North in the United States after a period of over 50 years of operation. During this time we know of only two lives being lost—that of Chris. Cook, mate of the Dakota, who fell overboard and was drowned in 1876 and a man, name unknown, who fell overboard from the Manitoba 15 miles south of Pembina on June 6, 1877. A fireman on the boat jumped into the river in an effort to save him, but was unsuccessful.

CHAPTER IX.

Here are some fragmentary items caught in our general research for data that may be of interest:—

—The Hudson Bay Company built a grist mill on Goose river, at Caledonia, in 1874. We have the following from Mr. Walter J. S. Traill, who had charge of the business of that Company in the Red River valley for many years:

“The farmers who had settled on Goose River from the mouth up for 30 miles were growing more wheat than in any other part of the valley. On Mr. Mc-Tavish’s return from Montreal in the spring of 1874 he gave me instructions to build a flouring mill at either Grand Forks or Goose River during the summer. Accordingly I built a 50 barrel mill at Caledonia getting power from Goose River. This was completed in October, 1874, and was the first flour mill in what is now North Dakota. The mill brought trade from much of the territory between Grand Forks and Moorhead and the stores did a good business; the village commenced to grow to such an extent that one C. M. Clark had a vision and started a saloon.”

While this does not pertain to navigation we will take space for the following from Mr. Traill regarding the establishment of the first school at Caledonia:

“There were a good many children of school age adjacent to Caledonia and there being no public money to support a school a meeting was called to devise plans for organizing a school. A Mr. Asa Sargent, leading merchant, said that he would furnish a building for school purposes and board the teacher free of charge. I told the meeting that the Hudson Bay Company would duplicate any amount of money that might be raised by those interested in



MOORHEAD AND FARGO LEVEE

education, including the employees of the Company, and the result was that an amount sufficient to employ a teacher for six months was raised at once. Miss May Cooley was employed and she proved an excellent teacher and in a short time there was a large attendance."

We have no record of any freight rate war between the different lines but when the Minnesota and Manitoba entered the trade in 1875 there was a radical reduction in passenger rates and the papers reported \$3.00 cabin and \$1.00 deck passage Moorhead to Winnipeg. No mention is made of meals and berth so doubtless neither were included in the cabin rate.

Moorhead was getting to be a town of considerable importance and the Red River Star man—W. B. Nickles—did not miss an opportunity to tell of it. In the issue of April 27th, 1875, he tells of seeing 5 boats, 6 barges and 11 flat boats at the levee at one time. Doubtless the 5 boats included the Minnesota and Manitoba, then in construction but it was a good count anyway.

In 1877 large quantities of lumber, lath and shingles were being run down the river in flat boats. The last of April that year the Star man saw 16 boats at the levee ready to leave Moorhead.

There was not much time for anything but digging hard to make a living but occasionally the people turned loose, especially to give the children some pleasure. July 24, 1877 Capt. H. W. Holmes with the steamer Selkirk gave the Sunday school an excursion. Left Moorhead at 5:00 P. M., went down to Probstfield and returned at 9:00 P. M. Adults paid 25c, children went free. The Star says of the occasion:

"The weather was fine, the river beautiful, the boat

in excellent order and its officers unremitting in their attention to their guests. A happier company is not often seen or a more pleasant excursion enjoyed."

The following day the Sunday school in Fargo was given a similar excursion.

During the summer of 1877 this same Capt. Holmes with the Selkirk took a locomotive and several flat cars on barges from Fisher's Landing on Red Lake river to Winnipeg, the advance guard of what was to kill off steamboating. We understand that this same locomotive is one of the treasured souvenirs of Winnipeg, at this time.

During the last days of August this year, 1877, the Selkirk brought some 2,000 bushels of wheat from the Grandin farm to Moorhead—said to have been the first wheat from that place.

Notwithstanding the fact that a railroad had been completed to Winnipeg and people generally conceded that navigation on Red River had seen its best days there was a public meeting in Moorhead in November 1879, largely attended, at which strong resolutions were adopted demanding that Congress appropriate sufficient money to build proper locks and dams to make Goose Rapids navigable at all stages of water.

While Dakota cannot be considered a "timber state" nor would it attempt to enter into competition in a contest as to big trees, nevertheless we find the following in a Moorhead paper:

"The largest cottonwood in the state is now growing at Frog Point on land belonging to Thomas Thompson, brother of Ole Thompson of Moorhead. The tree is grown with a very handsome head and is 24 feet and 7½ inches in circumference 12 inches from the ground. It is hollow 13 feet up and in the hollow space 15 people have stood."

CHAPTER X.

A CANADIAN OPINION.

It is always well to get the other fellow's view point, so the following may be of interest as expressing an opinion by a prominent Canadian. It was written by a Member of Parliament named Stirton and published in the Guelph, Ontario, Mercury about 1875:

"The steamboats plying on the Red River are flat bottomed drawing from two to three feet of water when loaded. They will carry over a hundred tons of freight with a fair share of passengers and also tug a pair of barges alongside containing a large quantity of freight. The time taken to go down the river is about 60 hours, and about four days to ascend the stream. The number of boats now navigating the stream are five belonging to the Kittson Line and two owned by the Merchants Line. The amount of freight carried by these boats is really astonishing, and will give one a very good idea of the fine thing Brother Jonathan is making out of the Canadians in connection with the business of this young Province. Just imagine six steamboats with their accompanying barges making each a trip a week, or a steamer a day, loaded with supplies of all kinds for a neighboring country, and a very large proportion of which are the products of their own country at that. When I mention the fact that the customs receipts at Winnipeg for the month of June alone were over \$50,000, one will form some opinion regarding the amount of business being done, and the great advantage being derived by the Americans who at present control that business.

"A very large saving has been made this season by the Province in the way of reduction of freights. This was brought about by encouraging and procuring an

opposition line of boats. The charges made in past seasons by the Kittson line were found to be unbearable, and a successful effort was made by leading men of St. Paul and Winnipeg to establish a new line of boats. Two very fine boats were built and commenced running at the opening of navigation. Freights were reduced to one-third of previous rates, and the people were beginning to get a great amount of benefit from this enterprise, but the new line had to contend against a powerful monopoly. The Hudson Bay Company is largely interested in the Kittson line, and uses all its powerful influence to choke off the new line. The struggle was a fierce one but was of short duration. One of the new boats was run into by one of the Kittson boats and sunk in twenty feet of water.

"This mishap completely crippled the new enterprise, and the probabilities now are that the new boats will be purchased by the old company, and the monopoly once more master the position.

"The Red River having its source and a large portion of its navigable channel in American territory it is, to a large extent, an American river and consequently subject to the narrow selfish navigation laws of the country. No Canadian or British vessel can navigate that stream above Pembina nor indeed can a British subject openly own a dollar's worth of stock in any vessel sailing within their territory. Such being the case one can easily understand the utter helpless condition of the people of Manitoba with regard to their trade with the outer world, and their dependent position on the American people. Hence, then, the intense concern manifested by every one about the speedy completion of the railway, particularly that portion of it from Thunder Bay to Red River,

“Were this portion of the road finished, the whole trade of this magnificent young country would be opened to the people of Canada. A journey to Manitoba would then become a mere pastime, and the present nuisance of bonded receipts, consuls, certificates and the cool sneers of Yankee officials at the pigheaded Canadians going into ‘that ’ere cold, God-forsaken country’ would be a thing of the past and remembered no more forever.”

This article was written after the gentleman had made a visit to Winnipeg. His source of information as to reduction in freight rates were erroneous, as one can easily see by referring to the rates in existence at that time as previously published. The new line adopted the same rates as were in force by the Red River Transportation Company and if there was any cutting of freight rates it was done secretly. As the freight for both lines was brought to the river by the same railroads it is easy to see that no such reduction as stated could have been made. National pride covers a good deal of the rest of the article.

CHAPTER XI.

OBSERVATIONS AND RIVER DATA.

We come now to some personal observations and some data regarding the river itself.

Engaged as clerk on the new steamer *Dakota*, built by Norman W. Kittson during the winter of 1771-72 at Breckenridge, Minn., we left St. Paul on Monday morning, May 6, 1872, over the St. Paul and Pacific railway, on a train in charge of Conductor H. P. Breed, a “kid” going to take his first job away from home, although not wholly deficient in steamboat education.

Including St. Paul there were then 36 stations on the

217 miles of road running out through some 75 miles of "big woods" and then over seemingly interminable prairies to Breckenridge, the then western terminus of the road. Breckenridge was a town of promise and contained about 150 people. The townsite was not quite so small as there were 2,200 acres duly platted.

The Dakota was a stern wheeler, as were most of the Red River boats, 92 feet long and 22 feet beam. Her cabin was a box shaped affair about 14 feet wide and 32 feet long, located aft of the smokestacks. Forward there were two rooms about seven feet square, one occupied by the captain, the other being the office. To utilize space and that the clerk might always be on duty, his berth was under the desk, which occupied the entire length of the room. Behind these two rooms was the "school section," a room about 16 or 18 feet long, with a door in the middle on each side opening onto the deck. Forward and aft of these doors were tiers of three berths on each side of the room, occupied by members of the crew, with a few extras for the general manager or the invited guest or the passenger, although we were not supposed to carry passengers, having no accommodations for them. This room was also the main cabin and our dining table was set in the middle. Aft was the cook house and cook quarters.

The crew of the Dakota for this year, 1872, was Jerry Webber, captain; Fred A. Bill, clerk; a mate whose last name has been forgotten but he was an old Norwegian "salt" whose first name was Nels; N. Yelle and John Provoncha, engineers, and Dave Barrett, cook and steward. No pilots, as such were included in the crew, that work being done by the captain and mate, there being no local work on the run.

After the usual numerous delays incident to getting

a new steamer under way, the Dakota left Breckenridge on May 12, at 2:35 p. m. with a small lot of freight and General Manager, N. W. Kittson.

Accustomed to the broad Mississippi, with its high wooded bluffs, the short kinks and low banks of the Red made the term "river" seem like a joke. However, we soon found that while the river might be a joke, we were confronted with a proposition that was not. The river was very low and not one of the crew had ever been over it. That, however, made little difference, as the channel was anywhere within the banks and easily seen.

We ran until dark and laid up for the night. The next day, 13th, we found our first real trouble at a gravel bar known as "Connolly's." Here we found only about 12 inches of water and the boat drew 17. Everything movable on the boat was taken off, and everybody worked including General Manager Kittson, who, however, was accused of picking light loads. Then after a good hard pull the Dakota was over the bar and in better water. We loaded up our stuff and went on our way, not exactly rejoicing, but soon hitting more trouble of the same kind and we toted our stuff around bars several times on the trip. Once the wind held us at the bank all day. Another day was lost in being inspected. We were supposed to have been at Moorhead on a certain date and there the U. S. inspectors, James McMurchy and George W. Girdon, were on time and after a short wait learned from the stage driver between Breckenridge and Moorhead where we were last seen and then set out to find us, a comparatively easy matter as our smokestacks showed above the banks wherever the banks were clear of trees, which was most of the way.

We soon ran out of fuel and cut what we could find at night. Once we landed for the night where there was no timber to cut and it was up to the clerk to find fuel. The result of a two mile tramp to the house of a settler, seen from the bank of the river, was a cord of inferior wood for which we parted company with \$12, and mighty glad to do it.

At that time McCauleyville, on the Minnesota side, about 14 miles from Breckenridge, was one of the "coming towns" and had some 200 people. Opposite was Fort Abercrombie, then kept in pretty good shape, although its usefulness as protection to the settlers from the Indians was gone.

Ole Thompson's was a stage station some 23 miles below the fort. Here the regulation dish of pork and beans, the staple article of diet there at this time, was put up in No. 1 shape to the passengers of the Minnesota Stage Company, operating regularly three times each week between Breckenridge and Moorhead.

About two miles below Thompson's was Holy Cross post office. It consisted of a long, low, narrow log building prominently situated on what was known as "twenty-five mile point," being half way between Fort Abercrombie and Georgetown. The name was given the place by a Roman Catholic priest who was the first postmaster.

CHAPTER XII.

Right here we will digress to quote Captain E. E. Heerman, for many years a steamboat operator on the upper Mississippi and Chippewa rivers and the pioneer steamboat man on Devil's Lake, North Dakota, having gone to that lake in 1882, in advance of the railroad to that point. Seeing a meagre account of our first trip on Red River some years ago, he wrote:

"I was much interested in the places on Red River above Moorhead, especially Holy Cross. You will not be surprised at this interest when I tell you that I am one of the few left who were there 14 years in advance of your record. Had you known that I with others, platted a full half section of land into town lots in 1858 and called the town "East Burlington," you would have laughed your head off!

"In the spring of 1858 Walter and William Hanna of Hastings, Minn., made the acquaintance of an old Hudson Bay employee who made a claim on the bank of the Red River in Minnesota opposite the mouth of the Wild Rice river, his object, so he said, was in the interest of navigation on the Red River. His name was Frank Rathplates. He had no means of carrying on such an expensive undertaking and finally got the Hanna boys interested so far as looking the proposition over, which they did with the understanding that if it looked favorable that I would furnish my part of the scrip to cover the land. Walter Hanna, David, Robert and Edward Griffith in June of this year started for Red River, arriving at the mouth of the Wild Rice river July 4, 1858. Walter Hanna broke two acres of land July 10, said to be the first broken in the valley. After Walter Hanna returned from the Red River I purchased my part of the scrip, 120 acres, and about the first of September proceeded to Red River, taking with me Walter Hanna, a surveyor, Mr. Walling, and another not calling to mind his name, driving my own team on this trip through Red River. We also fitted out an ox team with three months supplies which immediately followed.

"We left Hastings about September 1, driving through Minneapolis about where the business part of

the city stands, crossed to the east side on a ferry located above the island, thence to opposite St. Cloud. Ferried the river to the west side, thence to Cold Springs and not far from there was the last cabin at Lake Henry, or sometimes called Twin Lake where a Swede lived. We camped near his cabin. The mosquitoes were very troublesome. In preparing our meal we soon found more company in the frying pan than bacon. My best horse broke loose and started on the back track with great speed. We traced him until near midnight and not finding him returned to the Swede's shack and hired him and his mule, hitching up with my horse continued to hum west of Cold Springs and St. Cloud until near sundown the next day. We drove on an elevation where we could get a good view from all directions. There were three of us and neither one could see anything but the vast plains, not a shack or improvement of any kind. Walter Hanna thought he could see something towards the setting sun that looked like a deer. We drove that way and it proved to be the horse, having drifted into a place surrounded by water with only a narrow outlet. He was very friendly and we caught him without difficulty. Now it was sundown but the Swede knew the way to his shack and we arrived there about 11:30 a. m. the next day, very hungry and tired, having had nothing to eat but milk from the night before and for 30 hours fighting great swarms of the pests of the prairie, but were very thankful that it was no worse. We continued our trip the next day, fording big and small streams, in many of which we would break down in mid-stream. No bridges or ferries after we left St. Cloud. At one place we saw an abandoned boiler on the prairie; at another we passed a partly built log house, near Bear Lake. There were said to be two crossings on the Otter Tail river. At the place where we crossed

there was nothing to indicate that any one lived there. It was a long and tedious trip but we arrived at the bank of Red River and found a comfortable shack and plenty of fish and easily caught. We feasted on them in great shape, this being the first shack since we left the Swede's near Cold Springs about 20 days before.

Here we found the great level plain covered with blue joint grass about four feet in height with the Sheyenne and other streams fringed with timber 40 to 50 feet high, twisting and meandering through the beautiful green grasses like a monster snake, truly the most beautiful landscape I ever saw. I was so favorably impressed that we immediately laid out our prospective townsite, calling it East Burlington, named after the Burlington, Iowa, where I spent many of my boyhood days, adding the East as a sort of compromise on the name. All our entries were made at the land office at Otter Tail City. It was later burned and entailed a good deal of trouble on account of the destruction of records. Think it was burned during the Indian troubles but am not sure. After the townsite business was well under way I returned to my business on the Mississippi. Immediately after the settlement started quite a business sprang up in flat boating freight down the river, the freight being hauled from St. Cloud. Edward Griffin said that during 1861 the whole valley was overflowed, the only dry land being at Moorhead as now known. John Hanna bought my interest in the place during 1859-60. Settlers came in good numbers up to the Indian outbreak in 1862. The Hannas were at Hastings or St. Cloud when the outbreak came. The inhabitants succeeded in getting to Fort Abercrombie with one exception but all the property was burned and the land vacant for many years, when it was settled

by Rev. Father Babtis Merris Genin, who was born in France in 1837, brought to Montreal in 1860 and located here about 1867. Father Genin built a church at the mouth of the Wild Rice and the place was known as Holy Cross. About 1872 a party of railroad surveyors found him at this place making hay with some half breeds. The church was built on the old townsite and at that time the Father supposed it was vacant land I understand he made several efforts to purchase the property. Several people were buried there, I have been informed. The place is some seven or eight miles south of Moorhead in Clay county. Ignatius Donnelly, then member of congress, made a good but unsuccessful fight to have the Northern Pacific cross the Red River at this point instead of at Moorhead.

In 1876 I caught the Red River fever again, got an option on Northern Pacific bonds at $13\frac{1}{2}$ cents on the dollar, to be converted into land, which made the price of land cheap, selected my land near Maple River and was so delighted with the land proposition that I filed a tree claim right on the bank of Maple River. Returned to St. Paul to complete the deal and the first thing I saw in the Pioneer, as I was looking it over at the breakfast table was that the company that had my money had made an assignment."

E. E. HEERMAN,
Devils Lake, N. D.

All things have an end and we landed at Moorhead at 9 o'clock p. m. on May 20, a little over eight days out from Breckenridge, a distance now 46 miles by rail and easily covered by train in one and one-half hours.

The completion of the railroad bridge across Red River at Moorhead had been delayed to enable us to get down with the Dakota as the bridge plans did not provide for a draw span.

Moorhead was the terminus of the Northern Pacific railroad and was named for Wm. G. Moorhead, a member of the board of directors of the railroad. The town was formed in September, 1871, and became the county seat of Clay county, organized during the winter of 1871-72. The track was laid to the town in January, 1872, and the first train went over the bridge into Dakota Territory, June 6, 1872. There were about 800 people where eight months previous had been bare prairie. The main hotels were the Knappen, Chapin and Western houses. Loring, Black and Company had a mammoth tent under which they did a big business in general stores and supplies, the railroad contractors being large customers. Other business houses were James Douglas, hardware and groceries and a post office. Hubbard, Raymond and Allen and Bruns and Finkle had general stores and Francis Berquist dealt in stationery and notions. The Red River Star, a weekly paper, was started that spring by W. B. Nickles, formerly connected with the St. Peter Tribune.

The Rev. O. H. Elmer conducted an occasional religious meeting in one of the N. P. coaches. He had previously held the first service in the town in the dining room of the Chapin House on October 22, 1871, and organized the first church, with eight members, on May 22, 1872. We mention these incidents to show that there was some "leaven" in this then typical frontier town, the majority of whose inhabitants were of the transitory and decidedly free and easy, not to say bibulous type.

The freight warehouse was a frame building of ample size located as close to the river as practicable, but necessarily some distance above the water at an ordinary stage to allow for the uncomfortably high stage of water which came frequently. A tramway was built on the water's edge on which our freight was run to the boat on small cars by gravity. During the summer it became necessary to cut a notch in the bank on one side of the river into which our longest boat stuck her nose in order to round to.

Fargo was a sort of canvas back town, the most of its inhabitants living in tents. It had been designated as division headquarters and the railroad operations were about all that were there at that time. A large railroad hotel, with commodious depot and round house were constructed during that summer and by fall the town had a much improved appearance.

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

Few, if any, of the men who operated boats on Red River were "developed" on that stream. Almost to a man they came from the Mississippi. A complete list is of course impossible at this time but the following is believed to include the most of those serving in the positions named:

CAPTAINS—W. H. Alsop, Frank Aymond; James Bissell; Milton J. Fadden; Alexander Griggs; Bruce Griggs; Al. Haycock; H. W. Holmes; John A. Kent; M. L. McCormick; ——— McLain; Ham McMicken; Sam T. Painter; E. S. Perro; John S. Segers; James Sheets; Chas. B. Thimens; ——— Townsend; Aaron R. Russell; Jerry Webber.

These men were also pilots and many of them stood watch at the wheel while acting as captain as there was practically no local business in the trade.

CLERKS—A. Aymond; Fred A. Bill; O. H. P. Cooley; D. H. Crockett; Wm. Cowan; Charles B. Ebert; James Elton; Charles Green; C. C. McCloskey; Frank McLaughlin; James Owens; Frank M. Painter; O. Peniston; A. M. Pettit; S. S. Spaulding; Harry Y. Smith; Joseph Smith; H. A. Vitt; H. P. Wybrant; James D. White.

MATES—Chris Cook; R. Daggett; Julius Dougal; Morgan S. Gray; Hugh Maloney; John Murphy; Joseph Painter; Joseph Smith; John Smith and an old time Norwegian "salt" whose first name was "Nels" but whose last name has been forgotten.

PILOTS—Joseph Amlot; John Cavanaugh; V. Cover; — Crandall; H. DeMers; Julius Diugal; John Griggs; William Griggs; William Gruber; James Lauderdale; O. Provoncha; W. J. Slattery.

ENGINEERS—J. Bissonethe; Thomas Bryant; A. H. Bryan; J. Chadwick; J. Claremont; T. J. Connolly; John Connolly; John Duckworth; F. Guion; A. Hurd; M. A. Hutchins; Joseph Lazier; Oscar Lysted; Wm. Miller; — McPherson; J. W. Perry; Daniel Pond; John Provoncha; William Provoncha; Arthur Thornton; James White; J. Wybrant; George Yager; James Yelle; N. Yelle; Jesse Young.

STEWARDS—F. M. Arbuckle; Geo. W. Arbuckle; David Barrett; Wm. Bussey; L. Cornick; — Conklin; L. Dresser; A. McLinis; Martin McMahon; J. K. Swan; H. Warfield; W. S. Warfield.

N. W. Kittson was general manager of the boats owned by the "monopoly" with office in St. Paul and Chris. Michael was his chief clerk, who looked after the details of the line. Frank S. DeMers was agent at Moorhead, later at Crookston, Fisher's Landing and

St. Vincent. About 1875 the services of a Superintendent were needed and the position was given to Captain E. V. Holcombe, with headquarters at Winnipeg.

For the Merchants International Steamboat Line, Mr. H. C. Burns was general manager, with office at Moorhead. Robert Strang represented the Line at Winnipeg; George H. Hazzard, at St. Paul and W. L. MacLennan at Duluth.

In this roster mention has been made of only these in service in 1871 and subsequent years. Officers of boats previous to that time were mentioned at time of service, as fully as we know them.

In 1881 the British Government sent a "hurry up" call for some good swift water pilots for an expedition on the river Nile. Captains Ham McMicken, A. R. Russell, John S. Segers and Jerry Webber answered the call. They left Winnipeg in May, 1881, and after four years of faithful and successful service returned safely well pleased with their trip, experiences and treatment while abroad.

They are all now gathered to their fathers, as are also practically all those we knew personally in the above list. If the roll was called today, very few would answer.

CHAPTER XIII.

We at once entered the trade, Moorhead to Winnipeg, or Fort Garry as it was better known. The other boats in the line were the Selkirk and International. We were expected to get around the track about every eight days, water permitting.

Everything was new to the boy away from home the first time, his eyes and ears were open and he tried hard to make good and here are some of the things he saw:

Georgetown, 16 miles below Moorhead, was an old Hudson Bay Company's post. The few buildings were of logs, well and substantially built, but the place was fast losing its importance to its rival on the south, Moorhead. Here the stage route crossed the river into Dakota Territory.

Elm River, 12 miles below, was another wet weather creek dignified by the name of river. Here an enterprising homesteader had established a stopping place which he called the St. Nicholas hotel.

Mat. Harris', six miles below, was another stage station where entertainment for man and beast could be had.

Seven miles below Harris' Goose river joins the Red. This was the prettiest little stream in the whole section. The water was clear and cold, a striking contrast with that of Red River. An industrious Norwegian owned the town and conducted a store post office and the Eagle hotel.

Here commences the only real piece of bad river below Moorhead and it is known as Goose Rapids. They are practically 22 miles long and the entire fall is about 21 feet. The fall in the first mile is a little over four and one-half feet and as this section is well filled with boulders, the breaks from which are shown at different places at different stages of water, it is extremely dangerous at medium stages of water and impassable in low water. For many years there was discussion as to the advisability of the U. S. government putting in a lock and dam but by the time the proper surveys were made and the question submitted to the various boards interested, the commerce of the river was gone and Uncle Sam was ahead the cost of the improvements.



OLD FORT PEMBINA IN 1840-84
NORMAN KITTSO'S TRADING POST

At the foot of the rapids was Frog Point—later called Belmont—said to have been so named by Captain Sam Painter on account of the vast number of frogs seen there on his first trip. There were a substantial warehouse and a commodious residence that was called the Morgan House, as travelers could be accommodated therein. It was really a branch of the Hudson Bay post at Georgetown and was in charge of W. J. S. Traill, the company's Georgetown agent, with Asa Morgan, a recent comer from Maine, as his assistant. Freight was brought to this place by team from Moorhead when low water prevented the boats going over the rapids, the river being navigable to this point at practically any stage.

Here we had our first insight to the productiveness of Red River soil. Traill remarked one day that he was going to see if he could find some new potatoes and asked me to go along. We went a short distance from the house to a plowed patch on which weeds and some potato tops could be seen. Digging down under the partially rotted soil we found a large quantity of half grown potatoes. The planting had been done in the spring, under sod breaking, and there had been no cultivation whatever. It was a surprise and a fore-runner of what the Red River valley was to produce later.

Twenty-two miles below Frog Point was Grand Forks, at the mouth of Red Lake river. There Captain Alexander Griggs had a nice two story frame residence; Griggs, Walsh and Company a general store, with board sides and a canvas roof, and a small sawmill entirely in the open. In a bend about half a mile above was a stage station known as Stewart's, the many log buildings there outnumbering the buildings in Grand Forks proper. The prairie at that time was well dotted with

claim shanties and the only thing then in sight indicating the present prosperous city was the location. Henderson was the name first selected by Captain Griggs for the place, but later the present name was considered more appropriate.

Fourteen miles below was another stage station known as Turtle River.

Big Salt river was 18 miles further on. The water in this stream was so salty that it could not be used for drinking.

Five miles farther, Kelley's, another stage station with several houses.

Another five miles brought us to Little Salt river, similar to Big Salt but smaller.

For the next 30 miles the country adjacent to the river presented a very dreary appearance. The banks were good heights, timber was scarce, and tall blackened stumps, showing the result of fire, numerous.

An occasional sight of telegraph poles, as the wagon road and the river neared each other, were about the only things to be seen indicating civilization.

It was, therefore, a great relief when Fort Pembina, with its neatly painted and whitewashed buildings and well kept grounds, came in sight. It was then under the command of Colonel Lloyd Wheaton and a small body of troops were stationed there just as a matter of form, so far as we could see.

A mile further on was Pembina village, a very nice little place, at which was located the American customs office in charge of J. C. Stoevers, with N. E. Nelson, the efficient deputy, with whom we did our business and who did all the work for little of the pay. Judge Potter

presided over the U. S. land office. There were about 500 people around the place which was then the county seat of Pembina county.

All the way from Breckenridge to Grand Forks there were frequent shanties, indicating the homesteader or squatter, and many signs of life along the river. Below Grand Forks there was little of this and we would frequently run for miles with no sign of life on the banks. The river here lacked the attractiveness of that above in many ways.

Another mile and we came to the English custom house which was in a Hudson Bay Company post then known as North Fort.

After leaving the North Fort we found pretty heavy timber and the country had an improved look. The river was larger and the crooks longer. The country was fairly well settled with Indians and French half breeds, many of whom were doing considerable in the line of farming, probably more from necessity than from love of work.

CHAPTER XIV.

Scratching River was about 30 miles below Pembina and was only a stage station. Below this the timber got scarce, thick clusters of small poplar being about all there was to be seen. As we went down the inhabitants became more numerous and the country looked more inviting. The houses were substantial log affairs built more with regard for warmth than elegance.

Twenty-five miles below Scratching River was the parish of St. Norbert, located on both sides of the river. The Catholic church was a large building situated near the Rivere le Salle—in plain English, Stinking River, and it well deserved the name. Near the church Mr.

Joseph Le May had a small store and just below, on the river bank, a saw and flouring mill, both of which were doing a thriving business.

The next parishes were St. Vital, on the left and St. Boniface, on the right side of the river. These parishes extended down to Fort Garry, nine miles below Stinking River, the fort being located on the north side of the Assiniboine, just above its confluence with Red River.

All through these parishes were evidences of thrift and settlement of long standing, a welcome sight after the dreary miles through which we had passed.

Winnipeg was then a little village a half or three-quarters of a mile north of Fort Garry, and had perhaps 400 or 500 people. There were a few frame buildings but the most of them were of logs, substantially built, and well covered with whitewash. As we now recall, the custom house was the most prominent building in the village. J. H. Lyons carried pretty good stocks of hardware and A. G. B. Bannatyne had an extensive dry good stock. The Hudson Bay Company carried an immense stock of general goods and Mr. John H. McTavish was in charge, his title being chief commissioner. As this company did all our business we did not come in contact very much with the other merchants. We recall that a young man named Swinford had charge of the warehouse and we became quite good friends during the season. Later he held an important position with the Canadian Pacific Railway.

We made several trips between Moorhead and Fort Garry and then the water got low and Frog Point became the head of navigation, the freight being hauled from Moorhead, some 50 miles, by team. With every

little rise in the river the boats would be sent to Moorhead and as the Dakota was the lightest of the fleet she made the through run more frequently than the other boats.

Red Lake River.

An extension of the St. Paul and Pacific railway having been built north from Glyndon to where Crookston is now located, the Dakota got orders to go on an exploring expedition up Red Lake river. We left Grand Forks at 9:55 A. M. on September 3, 1872. On board were General Manager Norman W. Kittson, James J. Hill of St. Paul, H. S. Donaldson, R. Patterson, W. H. Cosgrove, W. F. Buxton, correspondent of the Toronto Globe, and "Butts" Sargent of Winnipeg.

All day we felt our way upward, finding snags and floodwood in many places, some of which had to be cleaned out before we could proceed. In one instance, going up on the side of an island showing the better water, we had to cut a tree that had fallen of a reddish hue and much more across the channel. The water was more swift than in Red River. We ran until dark and started early the next morning and soon found swifter water and boulders, showing heavy breaks, instead of snags. There was however, a good channel and at 6:15 on the morning of the 4th of September, 1872, the Dakota's whistle screamed shrilly on the crisp morning air, bringing the inhabitants out in full force to behold the first steamboat to land at the then unnamed place now the thriving city of Crookston.

We were in the woods, on the right bank of Red Lake river, about 23 miles from Grand Forks and some 13 miles due east of Frog Point. There were a couple of hundred people there then, most of them in tents or structures with board sides and canvas roofs, and

stores, saloons and hotels were in evidence. Although the bridge across Red Lake river had not been completed and no train had yet arrived, the "town" was there and functioning in good shape.

About a "public square" were several stores, both wet and dry and a number of "hotels", the main ones being "Our House" and "Ellsworth House", all very crude and rough.

The track had reached the south side of Red Lake river and a construction train was running to that point and a large force of men were at work on the bridge. Our landing was made about where the present passenger depot is located.

We pulled out on the return trip at 9:15 A. M., after once more awakening the surrounding country and reached Grand Forks at 6:45 p. m. with no occurrence worth mentioning on the down trip. Probably it is generally known that Crookston was named for Colonel Crooks of St. Paul, but it may not be so well known that among its proposed names were "Crooksbury" and "Aetna." Crookston was found to be 23 miles southeast of Grand Forks and about 13 miles due east of Frog Point.

The shoalest water found was four feet, which greatly encouraged the management, and arrangements were at once made to have freight routed to the Crookston instead of Moorhead, and on September 28th, the Dakota bade Frog Point adieu, as the head of navigation, and from that time we ran to Crookston. The Moorhead office, of which Frank S. De Mers was the head as agent, was moved to Crookston. Charlie J. Gooding was railroad agent and a man named Norton was telegraph operator. The office and depot consisted of

a box car and most of the freight was unloaded from cars to boat. Navigation closed the last of October and during the period of operation we took out about 1,000 tons of freight.

Please remember that the term "miles" generally in this article refers to miles by land. By water the distance is conceded to average not less than two to one.

A writer in the Red River Star in September, 1872, says of the crookedness of the stream:

"From Elbow Lake the course of the Red River is generally south until it flows into Otter Tail lake a distance of some 60 miles; by water probably twice as far. Thence its course is southwesterly, through valley lands of Otter Tail county, until it reaches the "flats" and thence westerly to its junction with the Bois de Sioux at Breckenridge. Here the Red turns abruptly to the north and pursues almost a direct line to its entrance into Lake Winnipeg, a little below the place of that name. Lest I be misunderstood I hasten to say that north is its general course. Its particular course is that of a reluctant and homesick pig being driven on a straight road to market."

Charles Wanzer, one of the assistant engineers, says in one of his reports:

"The river is very tortuous, averaging two miles of water to one of land, being a perfect system of short bends. In some cases a distance of one mile by water will accomplish but 300 feet by land."

The mileage and fall of the river, as found by the United States survey, is as follows:

	River Miles.	Feet Fall.
Breckenridge to Fort Abercrombie	26	35.5
Fort Abercrombie to Moorhead	71	39.2

Moorhead to Goose River	98	50.7
Goose River to Frog Point	22	21.
Frog Point to Grand Forks	35	12.8
Grand Forks to Turtle River	25	6.2
Turtle River to Pelican Bar	70.5	20.7
Pelican Bar to International boundary	48	9.8
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Making a total of	395.5	194.4

It will be noted that most of the fall is above Frog Point and that the average fall below that place is only about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches per river mile. The distance by land, Breckenridge to the boundary, is 194 miles thus making the fall about one foot per land mile.

To these figures we may add the distance by land from the boundary to Winnipeg, 68 miles; by river, 112 miles. The fall in the river is approximately 73 feet, thus carrying out the U. S. fall of one foot per land mile, practically.

While it was possible to make the run from Moorhead to Winnipeg in 60 hours in good water and the up trip in 4 days, the average round trip consumed about 10 days.

The Red River valley has suffered much from high water and on several occasions the flood has been disastrous. Flowing north the break up of the upper part of the river causes huge ice gorges which at times throws the water out of the banks and inundate large tracts of land. The United States engineers find that the difference between high and low water is about 12 feet at Breckenridge; 36 feet at Moorhead and 45 feet at Pembina.

CHAPTER XV.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS.

On one trip we had some machinery for a boat the Hudson Bay Company was to construct on the Saskatchewan river, and we made a trip to Lower Fort Garry to deliver it to a steamer called the Chief Commissioner, which operated on Lake Winnipeg. This fort was in the old Selkirk settlement, and the bank of the river on the west side resembled a street in a country village. The original settlers had been given land fronting on the river, a certain number of chains wide, and running back two miles. As children had grown and new families started, a strip off the side of the original grant, running back two miles, had been given to each new family and a new house built thereon. This had been going on for some fifty years, gradually making the village street effect mentioned, which was very new and interesting to me. The people were all Scotch and Scotch halfbreeds and nearly all descendants from the original Selkirk settlers. Forgetting history for a moment we asked a man about forty years of age from what part of Canada he came—that being one of the favorite topics of conversation—and were much surprised to have him say that he was born there and had never been anywhere else.

The Chief Commissioner was scheduled to deliver the machinery we gave her at the upper end of Lake Winnipegosis, the route being about one-half way down Lake Winnipeg; thence through St. Martin's river and lake into Lake Manitoba; thence through Waterhen river into Lake Winnipegosis. The upper end of this lake was but a short distance from the Saskatchewan, to which the machinery was to be hauled overland. The Chief Commissioner left at once but we heard later

that she was frozen in for the winter in Waterhen river so that the machinery did not reach its destination until the spring of 1873. Rumor came later that when the boat was completed, she struck a rock and was wrecked on her trial trip.

Mosquitoes were one of our worst enemies. They came and went in swarms like bees. Nets made of mosquito bar, with wires inside, a la oldtime hoop skirt, to be put over the head when one went out into the high prairie grass were a necessity and in common use. When under way the mosquitoes did not bother us much on the boat, but at a landing it was almost impossible to get any comfort.

One trip our mate was ill and unable to stand his watch as pilot, so it fell to me to stand a good part of the daylight watch, that the "old man", as the captain of a steamboat is always called regardless of his age, might get some sleep.

Just at noon one day we were coaxing the Dakota around a sharp point, in a narrow place, on a slow bell. Seeing she would not make it, we rang to stop and then back. The "old man" was eating dinner and hearing only the stopping bell, rushed out on deck and seeing her nose close to the bank, shouted rather excitedly, "Back her, Fred, back her!" To which we replied that we were backing all right but evidently the engineer was not. Something had let go in the "shipping up" apparatus and the engines would not back. Her nose went into the bank on one side of the river, she swung around until her wheel hit the other side and we had the river bridged. As the Dakota was not over 110 feet over all—including her wheel—this will give an idea of the width of the stream.

Just as we stopped, "Oo-hoo" came up the speaking tube and the engineer inquired: "Which side of the river is your claim on?" To which we replied that ours was at the head of the boat and that he could have the other side of the river. No damage was done as we were under very little headway and we were soon pulled around and again on our way.

At one time the Selkirk was loaded at Frog Point and ready to go when word came to wait for a party of Canadian government surveyors enroute from Moorhead. The boat was then completely loaded to every inch there was in the river. When the party arrived there was a large amount of baggage, instruments, etc., and the only place to put it was on the upper deck or roof. A member of the party having heard that the river was low and the boat likely to be overloaded, approached "Dempsey" Gray, the mate and inquired if the putting on this additional weight might not get the boat into trouble. "Dempsey" pointed to the blocked off condition of the lower deck and told him the trouble was there and that the putting of their baggage on the roof would have no effect on the boat at all! The explanation appeared satisfactory as no more questions were asked.

We were the youngest crew and on the smallest boat. Perhaps we were considered the "under dog" but any way every one treated us nicely and was ready to meet us half way, in spite of our ignorance of the business and customs of the country. Manifests of goods in our cargo had to be left at both customs offices at the boundary, and certain formalities gone through with.

Duties, however, did not then bother us much. Northbound freight, not in bond, was chiefly supplies

purchased in the United States, which the Canadian people were glad to admit free at that time. South-bound freight was chiefly furs going through the United States in bond.

In Winnipeg the atmosphere around the customs office was somewhat aristocratic. Like Uncle Sam, Queen Victoria had a certain amount of politics and some politicians to be taken care of. The customs office opened at 9 a. m. and closed at 4 p. m. and the rules at the Medes and Persians prevailed.

It was necessary to get a "clearance" from this customs office before a boat could leave Winnipeg and as this "clearance" could not be issued until after the boat had been loaded and no one knew of a "clearance" being issued out of business hours, our departure was governed thereby. There was a young fellow in the office who did practically all the work—so far as we were concerned—with whom we had all our dealings. Quite frequently he was around the warehouse when we were loading or unloading, glad to see someone from the "States", he having come from eastern Canada a short time before, and on several occasions we had invited him to have a meal with us on board. As we were in the "States" every week we were able to produce a little better "eats" than the average around Winnipeg at that time. One trip we were behind time and as we were working in the evening we remarked to this young man that it was pretty tough to lose the additional time necessary to get our "clearance." He wanted to know what time we would be ready to go and we figured about 1 a. m. which would mean a delay of about eight hours. He asked if we remembered a certain window in the second story of the customs house and said he slept in a room there, and if we would come up when we got loaded he would "let us

out." This was so unexpected that we said nothing about it, except to suggest to the engineer not to let her get too cold as we might go out during the night, but not to mention it. About 11:30 o'clock, the "old man" seeing that everything was going nicely and the end of the loading in sight, remarked that he would "turn in," which he did. We were through loading a little after midnight and I was back from the customs house with our "clearance" before 1 a. m. The "old man" was busy with his first sleep, but was awake on the instant when we told him we were ready to go whenever it pleased him. "Got your 'clearance'?" he asked. "Yes, sir." "How did you get it?" To this we replied that we had it, was tired and was going to bed and there was nothing to prevent his leaving when he desired. Next morning the Hudson Bay people were much surprised to find the Dakota gone and no one ever knew just how it happened. While nothing wrong in the incident, we preferred the young man should make what publicity he desired.

One trip we got into Winnipeg on the third of October, just in time to get the tail end of the "Second Agricultural Exhibition of Manitoba," to which the admission was 50 cents. The exhibit was held near the steamboat landing, and the large hall in the bonded warehouse was used for a floral hall, vegetables, fine arts, etc. This is the way the "kid" described the affair to his home folks:

"The collection would put to shame many a one at more pretentious fairs that we have attended. There were vegetables of all sorts. Cabbages that would fill half a bushel, cauliflowers nearly as large, onions, turnips, huge luscious watermelons, beets—one immense fellow, evidently the grandfather of the beet

that beat all the beets, measured 26 inches in circumference—and, in fact, everything that grows in Minnesota, except some of the smaller fruits.

“All around the hall were ‘fancy fixin’s.’ Beaded slippers, silk and porcupine quill worked tobacco pouches and slippers, mats, tides, fancy bedspreads, large loaves of white bread, fine furniture and many other things that reminded us that civilization was not far away. The crowd was a large one—everyone in his Sunday best and bound for fun. Of course we surveyed the female portion; many, very many, were fair to look upon! We saw Dolly Vardens, Grecian bends, chignons and cataracts, lily-white gloves half on, and contracted and roffin shaped waists, and then decided that civilization is here.”

The three following incidents will show something as to the crookedness” of the Red and Red Lake rivers:

One of the firemen on the Dakota lived a mile or so below Crookston and one trip, a short time before leaving this man asked permission to go home and there be picked up as the boat came along. Accordingly he rejoined the crew in due time. Some twenty minutes later while the steamer was plodding on, a comely young woman came into sight on the bank and Jack, one of the men, began to wave to her in a flirtatious manner.

“Wha’ do y’ mean, wavin’ to my wife?” the fireman asked, crossly.

“Your wife?” Jack looked at him incredulously.

“Yes, my wife! That’s my house; the river is right over there. It’s only three or four rods across there where I got on.”

Jack's undiluted astonishment saved him from the storm of wrath that had momentarily risen in the fireman's mind.

One day as we were going down stream, headed due north we heard through the woods on our starboard side the "chow, chow" of a steamer, and soon across a narrow neck of land we saw the International bound up stream and going parallel with us, due north. Each boat gave the other a salute with her whistle and we soon lost sight of her. Soon we met around on the bend and a little later we saw her again across the same neck of land, both of us going due south, the Dakota going down and the International up stream. This happened in one of the long bends below Grand Forks, and was a strange coincidence that might not have happened again in years of steamboating.

There was a point about two miles north of Moorhead where we used frequently to jump off of the fantail of the boat, walk to town, get the freight bills sorted and be ready for work on arrival of the boat.

We became acquaintanced with one John Mellon who had a claim a few miles north of Georgetown and one day we had a conversation with him that ran about like this:

"Been here long, Mr. Mellon?"

"Came to Georgetown last June; came here in July."

"From what part of the country are you?"

"Minneapolis."

"Don't you prefer that section to this?"

"Yes, indeed; if I was back there I should stay."

"Pretty cold here in winter, isn't it?"

"Yes, awful; we have all we can do to keep comfortable."



OLD STORE OF DAVID MCCAULEY,
MCCAULEYVILLE, MINN.

"Nice farm you have here; how many acres have you?"

"One hundred and seventy-five. Yes it is a nice place. This is a good looking country, fine soil and all that, but it is no country for a white man. The grasshoppers eat everything up. I had ten acres of oats. About fifty of these cusses were watching every spear and ate it the moment it appeared above ground. There were 20 acres of beans; all gone. We raise nothing in the summer and freeze to death in the winter."

This was the view taken by one of the most favorably situated of the farmer-settlers of those days; a district that became the "Bread-basket of the World," so called for its marvelous grain crops.

To one accustomed to the Mississippi, the Red River was a curiosity in many ways. On the Mississippi one finds shoals at the points and deep water in the bends, generally. The reverse was true in Red River, and the pilot held his boat as closely as possible to the point, and was sure to get aground when he got too close to shore in a bend. With this knowledge, except for a few places, any one who could handle a boat could act as pilot.

Fort Garry was the northern terminus of our run and the present fine city of Winnipeg was then in the making and what little there was then was about one-half mile away. The fort was at the junction of Red and Assiniboine Rivers and we entered the mouth of the latter to discharge our cargoes into the warehouse of the Hudson Bay Company. Much of our freight was for this company and was put up in bales weighing from 80 to 110 pounds, with ears sewed on each corner of the bale. These packages had been put up at head-

quarters in England and marked for each particular post in the then Northwest Territory. On many of the packages were the figures "74" and "75" which indicated that the goods therein were not expected to reach their destination before that time. In many instances these goods were delivered on the backs of Indians, hence the smallness of the packages and the "ears" on the bales.

There seemed to be a radical difference in the character of the people, as we saw them. Around Lower Fort Garry, the base of Lord Selkirk's settlement, they were of an agricultural turn, peaceful and home loving. Up the Assiniboine from Fort Garry the people were chiefly French half breeds and there was trouble most of the time. It seemed as though the mixture of Scotch-Indian blood brought out the best of the two nationalities, while the French-Indian mixture brought out the worst traits of each nation.

Freight rates, whether high or not, could not fight back so they were made the goat for the excessive prices charged for all commodities in Winnipeg. A man had a second hand put on a watch, for which the jeweler charged \$1.00. When the man kicked on the cost he was solemnly assured that the price was absolutely necessary on account of the high freight rates they were obliged to pay!

Just before leaving Fort Garry on our last trip Mr. McTavish, who had been very kind to us, expressed the hope that I would return the following season. As he was bidding us good-bye he called an Indian and gave him a message in the Indian tongue and told me to follow him. The Indian immediately went to one of the fur houses, pawed over a large pile of buffalo robes until he found one that suited him, tied it up in a nice

bundle and handed it to me with a grunt. We then realized that we had been presented with a mighty fine robe by the Hudson Bay Company, for which its Chief Commissioner got a hearty thanks later.

Winnipeg in 1910.

We did not return the next year, nor did we see the Red River valley again for 38 years. Moorhead and Fargo were strangers to us and the threadlike stream of dirty water did not resemble the fairly good navigable river that had in the past floated some pretty good boats. Crookston was a bustling little city and Grand Forks was a young metropolis with palatial residences where once was "Stewart's" log stage station.

The two rivers and a bit of one of the gates of Fort Garry in a park, were all that could be recognized in the Canadian Chicago, and even the rivers did not have a perfectly natural look. At the Lower Fort things looked more home-like and natural. The trees were larger and the stones of the fort were whiter, but there was a general appearance that said "How d'y" although the bustle and thrift of years ago were gone and the spirit of push and rush of old time Winnipeg had not reached the place.

Could we find in Winnipeg any who were there 38 years ago? Yes, there were some employees in the Hudson Bay Company's store who well remembered those days, and one good old veteran in business whose form was a little bent but his eye keen and his mental grasp on the situation fully as firm as in the old days—Mr. H. Ashdown.

There were some beautiful scenes on Red River in spite of its wildness. The "kid clerk" took them all in,

when he had time, and in a letter to the St. Paul Pioneer written on June 28, 1872, the following is found:

“Lovely indeed the mimic works of art,

“But nature’s work for lovelier.”

“So Cowper said and so we thought we cast our eyes over the prairie.

And drank of its beauty to our heart’s content. And it was beautiful!”

“Far to the west the gorgeous day ended and was sinking slowly to rest, his arms resplendent with beauty, tinting everything with a soft, mellow light, and lingering, seemed loath to depart.

“In front the broad, rolling prairie presented itself to our view, as far as the eye could reach looking so sweet and fresh with its pretty dress of design that it was waving gracefully to and fro on the light breeze.

“Behind us the river, with the thick foliage on its banks, on which Dame Nature had lavished her favors with an unsparing hand completed the picture. A splendid one—‘By forms unfashioned, fresh from Nature’s hand’—and defying both brush and pen to do it justice.

“It is a scene to make one feel at peace with himself and the world. Everything so true to nature, so pleasant so fresh, so quiet, so peaceful, so grand and so emblematic of Him who rules it with a master hand.”

(THE END.)

CINCPAC	3'72		
MAR 2	RETURN		
MAR 6	RETURN		
JUN 06	'86		
MAR 30	1987		
S I G	RETURN		

MAR 2	RETURN
-------	--------

MAP 6	RETURN
-------	--------

11 JN 06'86

1944

APR 30 1987

3	1	6 RETURN
---	---	----------

20

368601

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

IFE ON THE RED RIVER OF THE



368601

F
612
R27B59

Bill, Fred A
Life on the Red
River of the North,
1857 to 1887.

F 612 R27 B59 c.1

Bill, Fred A.

Life on the Red River of the N
HSS



0 0004 5950 904